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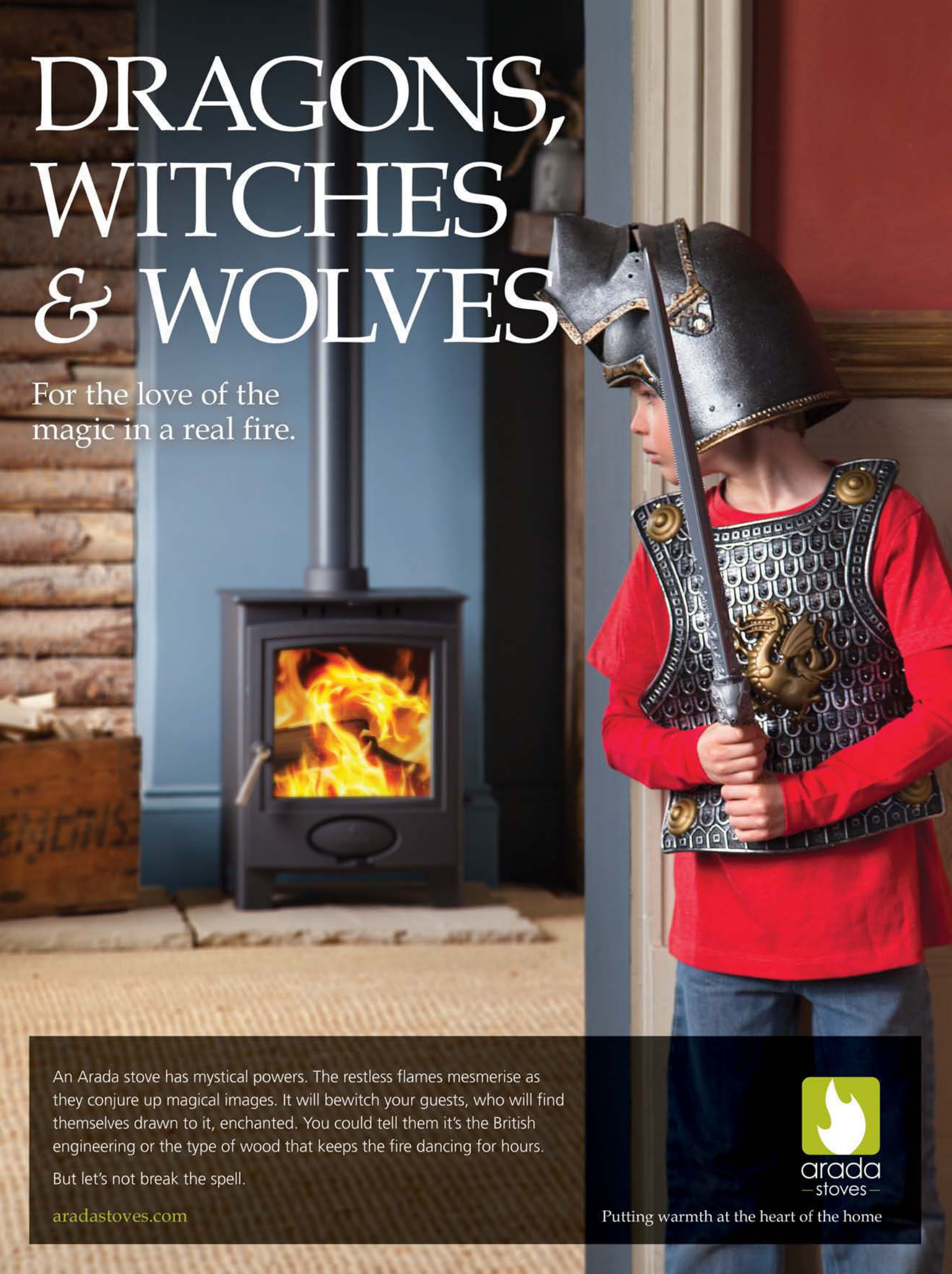
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EDITOR
Susan Dickerson 01206 505 976
susan.dickerson@aceville.co.uk
25 Phoenix Court, Hawkins Road,
Colchester, Essex, CO2 8JY

DEPUTY EDITOR
Seoana Sherry-Brennan 01206 508 625
seoana@aceville.co.uk

FEATURES EDITOR
Lloyd Burgess 01206 508 624
lloyd.burgess@aceville.co.uk

GROUP EDITOR
Naomi Abeykoon

EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTORS
Laura Atri, Laura Coppock
Jody-Ann Miller

GROUP ADVERTISING MANAGER
Daniel Lodge 01206 505 951
daniel.lodge@periodideas.com
21-23 Phoenix Court, Hawkins Road,
Colchester, CO2 8JY
facsimile 01206 505 953

SENIOR SALES EXECUTIVE
Daniel Hewlett 01206 505 952
daniel.hewlett@aceville.co.uk

DESIGN & REPROGRAPHICS
Ace Pre-Press, 19 Phoenix Court,
Hawkins Road, Colchester, Essex, CO2 8JY

ART DIRECTOR
James Philp

ART EDITOR
Debbie Pratt

DESIGNERS
Leo Bond, James Tuthill

PHOTOGRAPHY
CliQQ cliqq.co.uk

ADVERTISEMENT PRODUCTION
MS-typesetting management

SUBSCRIPTIONS MANAGER AND PROMOTIONS EXECUTIVE
Andrea Turner 01206 505 961
andrea.turner@aceville.co.uk

MARKETING EXECUTIVE
Callum Burgess 01206 508 605

DISTRIBUTION
Period Ideas is available to order from all good newsagents. Newstrade Sales Marketforce
020 3148 3300

CIRCULATION MANAGER
Mick Orrin 01206 505 912

PUBLISHER
Matthew Tudor

PUBLISHING DIRECTOR
Helen Tudor

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EDITOR'S LETTER



Dip INTO 2015

Make this the year of the bathroom with the cast-iron Rimini bath. Perfect for a period home, this tub is priced from £984. **020 7226 7220, astonmatthews.co.uk**



I believe there's only one New Year's resolution worth keeping – do more of what you love. Pick up your diary and ensure you make time for something you cherish every day. It could be anything from baking a surprise lemon drizzle for a friend to revisiting a book from childhood and reading it to a new generation. In fact, rediscovery is a big part of living in a period house, as you will see from our splendid assortment of real homes this month from p22. January is also a great month for keeping cosy in the kitchen so tuck into our kitchen special from p105 and enjoy creating a wonderful space for your family.

Susan Dickerson

EDITOR

This month Period Ideas has been: **GETTING EXCITED** *about the colours for Spring Summer 2015. Copper Blush is the new Coral.*
BOOKING *a trip to Rochester for a Dickensian Christmas.*
VERY IMPRESSED *by the new Jim Lawrence catalogue.*
PLEASANTLY SURPRISED *by the range of dog treats at Wilko.*

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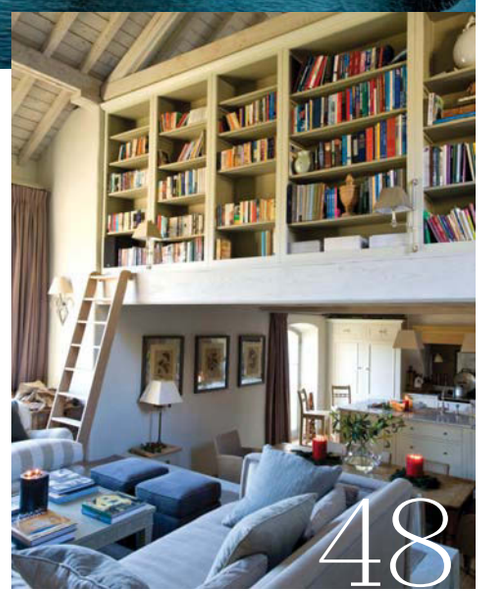
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KITCHENS BEDROOMS BATHROOMS



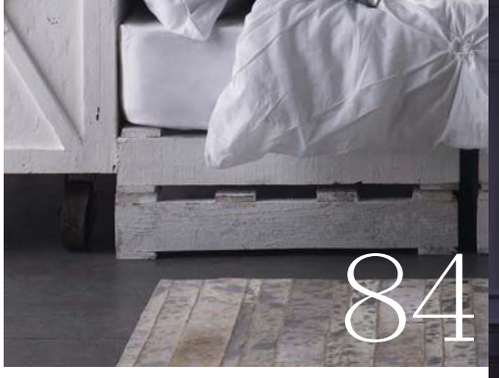
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SEE PAGE 136 TO SUBSCRIBE TODAY

Pay just £6 for your first three issues of *Period Ideas* with free delivery direct to your door. Classic inspiration for your home and garden all year long.

JANUARY'S ESSENTIAL SHOPPING LIST

HOME STYLE

Keep up to date with the latest designs and happenings this month



SHINING LIGHT

With its shimmering bands, this new Eternity 10 pendant, priced at £372 from där Lighting, will make your interiors sparkle this season. ***darlighting.co.uk***



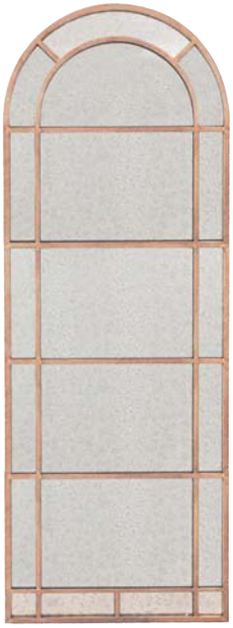
BLUE CRUSH

Create an eye-catching statement in your hallway, study or bedroom with this turquoise Persiana desk, priced at £1,548 from Oficina Inglesa. For a truly bespoke piece, you can customise its shelves and drawers, and pick a preferred finish from handcrafted cherry wood, oak, walnut, mahogany or various stylish paint effects. **020 7226 4569, oficinainglesa.com**



SCENTS & SENSIBILITY

Candles are perfect for creating a gorgeous ambience over winter. At Aroma Works, you can find a whole range made from natural ingredients that produce gorgeous, soothing scents. Call **01189 487 071,** or click on **aroma-works.com** to see the complete selection of candles and essential oils.



COUNTRY LIFE

The XL arch leaner mirror, which features distressed, vintage-style glass and an antiqued metal frame, is sure to make a statement in your home. Priced at £200 from BHS, it will be a standout piece for your hallway, living room or bedroom. **0344 411 6000, bhs.co.uk**



PERFECT ANGLES

Bold blues are bang on trend for 2015, and this Ben de Lisi indigo corner sofa, priced at £1,620 can be the centrepiece of your new living room scheme. The bold Helsinki nest of tables is priced at £230, while the stylish wire lamp is £50, and the snazzy striped rug starts from just £180, all from Debenhams. **0844 800 8877, debenhams.com**

BLUE VELVET

Brand new furniture and accessories brand Atkin & Thyme has recently launched with a 120-piece collection, including this Pimlico armchair in velvet, priced at £395. Head online to browse the full range and see what else is on offer. **0844 409 9834, atkinandthyme.co.uk**

OLD BILL

The National Portrait Gallery has released a decorative collection of products inspired by its current William Morris exhibition. From silk ties to a handmade upholstered chair, there's something for every fan of this legendary designer. This Strawberry Thief cushion costs £45. ***020 7321 6624, npg.org.uk/shop***



DIARY DATES

Make sure this isn't a winter of discontent by taking in the sights of our capital – made famous by legendary playwright William Shakespeare – with the Museum of London's guided tour. Stroll along the banks of the Thames, traverse the river to reach the city streets that inspired his plays, and stop by his Silver Street home. Book now for £12.50, with dates available until 17th January. ***020 7001 9844, museumoflondon.org.uk***

COLOUR POP

Brighten up your kitchen with these Acacia wooden boards from Berry Red. Priced at £19.50, the striking neon edging makes chopping your vegetables far more exciting. **0845 450 3937, berryred.co.uk**





BOLSTER UP

The new Para Handy collection from Lucy Donnell features a mix of gorgeous colour combinations and soothing neutrals to create these sumptuous cushions. This sea blue design costs £59 and has a 100% British-spun lambswool filling for extra cosy comfort. **0141 946 7292, lucydonnell.co.uk**

Decorating with...

SEASONAL PAINT

Discover how an easy update can breathe new life into your home and reinvigorate it for 2015

Edited by **SEOANA SHERRY-BRENNAN**



Breakfast Room Green (No.81), £36 for 2.5l of Estate Emulsion, Farrow & Ball. **01202 876 141, farrow-ball.com**

Low-cost and instantly effective, paint is a foolproof way to spruce up your interiors. Whether you're doing up the living room or freshening up your front door, there is a paint finish to suit the task, and thousands of different hues for you to pick from.

RICH HISTORY

While we're used to popping to our local DIY store and choosing from an endless selection of shades, there hasn't always been such a huge variety. In prehistoric times, we were limited by a palette that consisted of materials obtained from the earth - such as charcoal, ochre and calcium. The Ancient Egyptians added blue and green to the mix, using a copper mineral to create strong, vibrant colours.

As the human race evolved, the appreciation of art became a key part of the Enlightenment and painting became more popular. In 1776, William Reeves launched a business producing cakes of watercolour for creative aristocrats to buy, so that they could indulge in their new pastime. During the industrial revolution, paint companies developed advanced chemical processes which enabled a rainbow of colours to be made for a whole new audience of home-improvers to use.

INSTANT RESULTS

Unlike working with wallpaper, which requires time and patience, you can instantly see a dramatic difference when using paint, and change the ambience of a space almost immediately. Provided your walls are sufficiently primed, there isn't much in the way of skill required other than a steady hand for cutting in edges and corners – and even if you don't have that, there are many tools to help make these fiddly jobs easier.

The only limit when it comes to paint is the size of your tin. You can even take your decorating one step further with paint effects, such as block printing, graduating colour or decorative rollers. Or, for a quick refresh, renew tired looking furniture with a fresh colour. The beauty is, if you change your mind, just reload your roller and start again!

TREND REPORT

Stay in style throughout 2015 with one of these gorgeous hues from the Mr & Mrs Smith collection at Colour & Paint. £35 for 2.5 litres of deep flat matt emulsion, **0845 459 9771, colourandpaint.com**



Parrot Cay

St Rémy

Parisian Deco

Hanoi Lacquer

Miami Deco

GOLDEN *Rules*

Before you brandish your brush or roller, follow Homebase's expert guidance for working with and choosing paints:

- Make sure the surface you're about to cover is clean, dust-free, smooth and dry. If necessary, wash with sugar soap. If the plaster is gloss painted, rub the wall down with 40 grit abrasive paper wrapped around a cork block or, if it's new, remove any blistering and fill in blemishes.
- Prior to picking up a pot, carefully consider how the room you're about to redecorate is used. For living spaces and bedrooms, a standard coloured emulsion will create a super-smooth finish that is wipeable and long-lasting. In children's rooms, opt for a more durable paint that will survive knocks and scrapes. Moisture-resistant paint will be necessary in areas such as the kitchen and bathroom, and most products also come with a 5-year anti-mould guarantee.
- There is nothing worse than getting close to the end of a job and realising you've bought either too much or too little paint. Use our handy online calculator to work out how much paint you need to purchase, by entering the dimensions of the space and listing any doors or windows.

0345 077 8888, homebase.co.uk

Light Blue (No.22), £36 for 2.5l of Estate Emulsion, Farrow & Ball. **01202 876 141, farrow-ball.com**

INDUSTRY INSIGHT



Trevor Bradford, Co-Founder & Managing Director of The Colour & Decor Company and colourandpaint.com, shares his advice for using paint in your home:

"Paint is the easiest and most cost effective way of rejuvenating any home, and colour choice is the key to authenticity. So many lovely period properties can have their essential character stripped away when their owners lack confidence and knowledge of how colour schemes work. But where can you turn for inspiration? I always think that museums and galleries are a great place to get fresh ideas for your home, as they take a lot of time over selecting wall colours on which to mount work, which also creates the perfect palette for period homes. It also acts as the ideal backdrop to hang art in your own home - from posters and photographs, to prints and paintings."

Pink Ground (No. 202), £36 for 2.5l of Estate Emulsion, Farrow & Ball. **01202 876 141, farrow-ball.com**

Online Inspiration

We've compiled our most inspirational paint ideas and handy hints in one place, head to **pinterest.com/periodideas** to take a peek!

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Site to see

Treat yourself or a green-fingered acquaintance to a Friends' Membership at the Garden Museum. The pass opens the door to an exciting programme of exhibitions, exclusive private gardens and bespoke garden visits, as well as the chance to rub shoulders with the gardening greats. Membership is £30 a year, visit **gardenmuseum.org.uk** *for further details.*

Gardeners' gubbins pots, £19.95, Annabel James. **0845 548 0210, annabeljames.co.uk**



BLOOM OF THE MONTH

'DIANTHUS CARYOPHYLLUS'

Our resident flower fanatic Seoana Sherry-Brennan tells us more about this popular perennial.

"Available in a spectrum of colours, each of which symbolises a different sentiment or emotion, Carnations are also the birth flower for the month of January. Petals in pink hues are the most emblematic, and according to Christian legend, first appeared on Earth as Jesus was carried on the cross, springing from the spot where The Virgin Mary's tears fell. The formal name for the flower, 'dianthus', comes from the Greek for 'heavenly flower', and some scholars believe that the name carnation comes from 'coronation' or 'corone' meaning flower garlands, as it was one of the flowers used in Greek ceremonial crowns. Carnations require well-drained, neutral to slightly alkaline soil and full sun, and will grow up to 80cm tall."

Buzz word

Gardeners are being urged to let their lawns grow in an effort to sustain Britain's bee population

Environment secretary Elizabeth Truss has revealed a Government strategy that will detail how gardeners can work harder to save the country's population of honeybees. The main idea is to encourage a flower-rich habitat, which means that lawn mower lovers need to retire their machines and allow their gardens to go wild. The initiative comes after scientists warned that British bee numbers are in serious decline, with 71 of our wild species under threat and more than 20 already extinct. If you want more tips for allowing wildlife to flourish in your garden, visit **rspb.co.uk**

Seasonal shopping Garden Journal

The latest news, inspirational ideas and expert advice for your great outdoors

EYES TO THE SKY

Get ready to walk on the wild side with Birdwatch 2015. The world's biggest wildlife survey is back, and is taking place on 24th–25th January. The RSPB needs your help to get a clearer idea of the number of badgers, hedgehogs and other creatures in gardens nationwide, in order to determine how Britain's wildlife population is faring. You can take part on your own or with your family, and there is an online bird counting tool available to download on your laptop, tablet or smartphone to make recording your observations even easier. For more information on how to get involved, visit **rspb.org.uk**

WIN £50 to spend at thewellyshop.com!



There's always something to be done in the garden, and winter is no exception. Whether it's a spot of pruning or clearing up fallen leaves, there's never a dull moment! Unfortunately for keen growers, this season brings with it all manner of undesirable weather – from sleet and snow to rain and mist. Wrapping up warm and dressing sensibly is essential, which is where **thewellyshop.com** comes in. The online company has a huge range of gardening wellies to keep your tootsies warm, dry and stylish in all conditions. We've teamed up with the brand to offer four lucky readers the chance to win a £50 voucher to spend on their website. For your chance to win, head to **periodideas.com** and fill in the giveaway form. Good luck!

RETAIL THERAPY

Brighten up dark winter days and put a smile on your face with these colourful outdoor accessories

PERFECT PASTELS
A cute tin bucket in a charming hue will showcase your blooms perfectly, £4.50 each, The Contemporary Home. **02392 469 400, tch.net**

CITRUS PUNCH
Resistant to fading and deterioration, this chromatic cushion will bring a hint of sunshine to your outdoors, £64.39, Coast New Zealand. **coastnewzealand.com.au**





ROSY GLOW
Shed some light on dark evenings with the pretty flickering of a handful of tealights, £4, Tesco. **0800 323 4050, tesco.com/direct**



EARLY BIRD
Add a touch of the tropics to your garden with a fine feathered friend, £29, MAIDEN. **020 7998 0185, maidenshop.com**



CAN-DO
Make good use of a deluge of rain and water your plants using this sunny watering can, £10.86, Littleville. **littleville.com.au**

BRANCHING *out*

Lucy Chamberlain heralds in the new year and reminds us to look forwards, not back, as we celebrate the start of 2015.



Lucy Chamberlain **is the editor of *Grow Your Own*. For more growing tips and gardening ideas, pick up the next issue, on sale 5th December.**

EXPERT ADVICE



"The temperature has dropped, trees are slumbering and it's time to draw old things to a close and start afresh. But don't lie dormant for too long because you'll miss out on what a winter plot has to offer you – and you'll be pleasantly surprised at just how much that is!

We're right in the heart of Mother Nature's down time, but there's still plenty going on in the edible garden. Robust brassicas and super-hardy root veg are hunkering down waiting for the next harvest, and fruit trees and bushes are awaiting their annual trim.

It's a key time to order new stock too, so get online or snuggle up with a seed catalogue and dream of spring.

Your fruit stores should be full now – check regularly for signs of rot and bitter pit, removing unhealthy fruits as soon as the symptoms appear. Think carefully about where you want to plant new stock too – replant disease can occur if you continually choose the same location.

It's also time to start pruning! Trees, vines and bushes will all benefit from your efforts. Focus on removing diseased and damaged growth, keeping tools razor-sharp.

Once you've completed this job, a bonfire will probably be in order. Sprinkle the resulting wood ash around non-ericaceous crops for a gentle potash boost."

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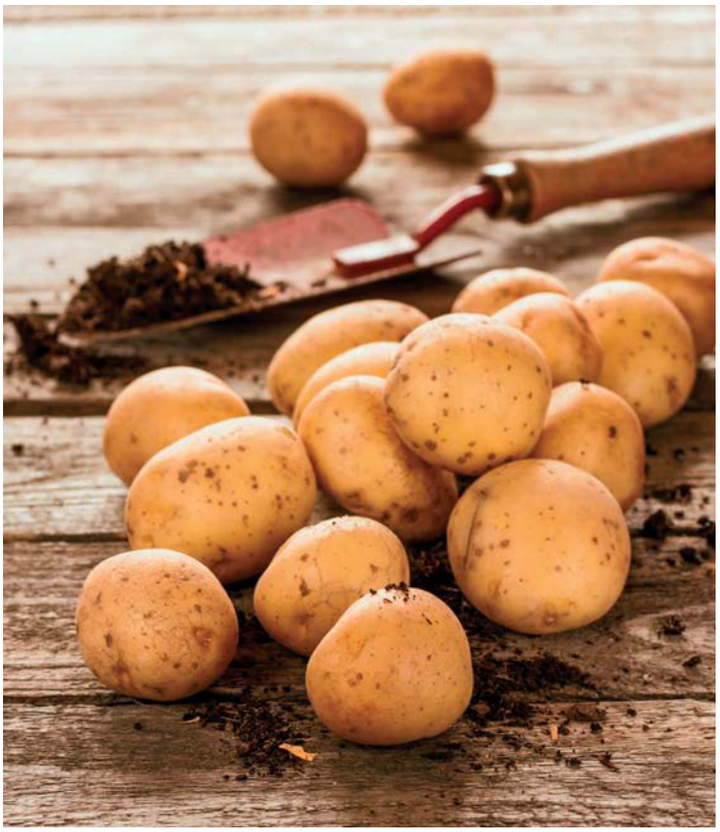
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GARDEN GOSSIP

Sarah Raven

The queen bee of the British gardening scene reveals her planting advice for the month and shares a fantastic offer with you

There is almost nothing nicer than a home-grown, freshly dug new potato, in the pot and eaten within half an hour of emerging from the ground. I like to add a sprig of mint to the boiling water for the last five minutes, for an extra dash of deliciousness. Until you've tasted that, you haven't tasted a true potato, and you don't even need a garden to do it! Growing potatoes in large pots, or even robust garden bin-liners, is easy to do on a balcony or deep and sheltered window-ledge.

If you fancy giving it a try, late January is the perfect moment to chit your potatoes. 'Chitting' means getting the potato to sprout – just like they do if you leave them in the kitchen cupboard for too long! To do this, place your spuds in a light, cool (but frost-free!) place at about 10°C. Each seed potato will have a rounder, blunt end with a number of 'eyes' – place them with this side facing up. I put half of mine in the porch, by the window, and half in the greenhouse. Light is important, so don't shove them right at the back of a shed. If you only have a few tubers, line them up in egg cartons.

There is great debate about the necessity of chitting, but in our comparisons at Perch Hill, it guarantees a quicker and slightly larger harvest. With early varieties (my favourites are 'Winston', and 'Belle de Fontenay'), it gets them off to a flying start, so we can begin the harvest by the end of June. We also do it for blight-prone, maincrop potatoes like the very tasty 'Pink Fir Apple'. It makes them grow faster and form larger tubers once planted out, so we can get in a crop in August or early September, before the worst of the blight takes hold.

Keep an eye on your potatoes and wait for strong, short green shoots to appear from the eyes, about 8-10cm long. If you want to maximise the size of your potatoes, rub off all but three or four at the top end of the tuber before planting out in March and April. Earlies need to be planted 12-15cm deep, spacing them 30cm apart, with 60cm between each row. Plant maincrops 12-15cm deep as well, but leave 40cm between each potato and 75cm between the rows for the perfect crop.

Sarah Raven has been running cooking, flower arranging, growing and gardening classes at her East Sussex farm since 1999, and has presented on BBC Gardeners World. She also has her own website, where you can purchase flowers, seeds, kits and view a full list of courses, ***sarahraven.com***

Reader offer

Period Ideas readers can get 15% off all of Sarah's favourite varieties*. Simply visit **sarahraven.com** or call **0845 092 0283** and quote offer code **PD15JAN**

*Offer valid until the 31st January 2015 and cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Subject to availability. Offer cannot be used in the Perch Hill shop.

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AXMINSTER CARPETS

Period Ideas celebrates the best in British interiors

Axminster Carpets' exceptional woven and tufted carpets are known throughout the world as an emblem of British quality and stylish design. The iconic brand began in 1755, when Thomas Whitty starting making carpets using what soon became known as the Axminster method of weaving. The company continues to design and manufacture solely in the UK, predominantly at its headquarters in the market town of Axminster, Devon.

Wool is at the heart of the business, and all of its carpets are at least 80% pure new wool – primarily sourced from British breeders. This material is the perfect natural choice for carpet as it adds a luxurious, long-lasting foundation to any room. This heritage and tradition of high-quality carpet manufacturing is combined with cutting-edge design to produce beautiful Axminster Carpets that are suitable for all manner of properties – from period homes to modern luxury interiors.

New product design and development is a fundamental part of the business, and its in-house design studio, which is also based in the Devon headquarters, has seen a number of innovations as of late. This includes Royal Borough's Wilton collection, which has received a great response. Featuring geometric, trellis and herringbone patterns perfect for the modern period home, these exceptional, high-quality carpets make a statement while perfectly blending into a range of décor schemes. While Royal Borough provides innovative pattern design, Axminster Carpets also offers a comprehensive range of heritage patterns and sumptuous plain carpets, should you prefer more traditional styles for your interiors.

The British brand also prides itself on meeting current trends and fashions. The new Simply Natural colourways extend the Simply Natural and Rustic Weave Collection to an impressive 47 shades and textures of carpet, including a selection of on-trend grey shades including cool ashes, clay greys and dusty eggshells.

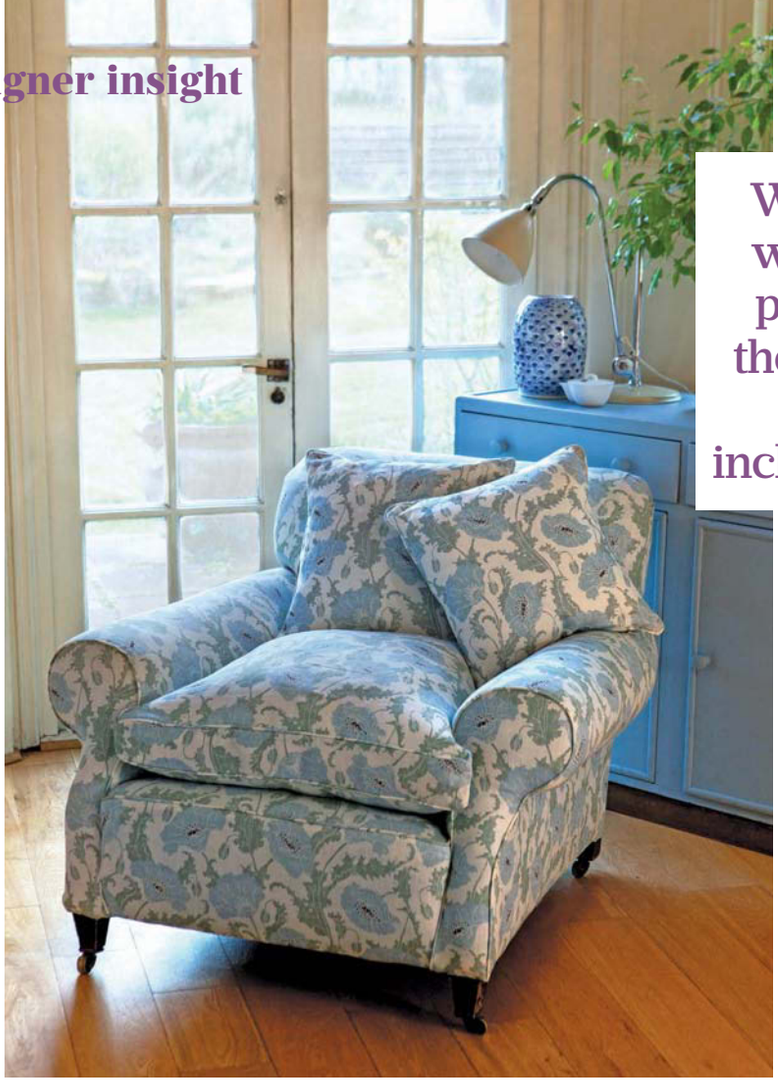
Designed with the demands of modern living in mind, the collection adds luxurious texture to any period home. The fine-quality pile is not only soft and warm underfoot, it also offers the benefit of extra heavy domestic classification, making it particularly durable in high-traffic areas such as hallways and stairs.

Continuing its innovative spirit, Axminster Carpets was one of the first carpet manufacturers in the UK to introduce personalised rugs. Its new Imagination range evokes memories from childhood with wildlife and nature themes, such as its 'Sheep Sharing', 'Baby Bunting' and 'By the Seaside' designs. Each of the 12 rugs are 100% wool and woven using traditional methods to meet the same high standards as its carpets.

All Axminster Carpets products are available to view on its easy-to-use website, which is full of interior design ideas and inspiration for your period home. You can even order free samples, should you wish to test a colour or pattern in your home, and you'll also find information on your nearest Axminster carpets retailer.

Axminster Carpets secured a Royal Warrant in 2013 and supplies Royal households so, whatever your requirements, you can rest assured that it provides the very highest quality service and design when producing your beautiful, British carpets.

Heritage and traditional manufacturing are combined with cutting-edge design to produce beautiful Axminster Carpets



AT HOME WITH...

Emily Burningham

Seoana Sherry-Brennan uncovers the inspiration behind Emily Burningham's new collection



Growing up in Hampstead, surrounded by antiques and textiles, gave Emily Burningham a deep appreciation of art and the desire to start her own creative business. Her parents, John Burningham and Helen Oxenbury, are well-known authors and illustrators. After graduating from Central St Martins, Emily designed cards and wrapping paper, but her flair for creating repeat patterns took her into textile design. Today she produces cushions, accessories and stationery, as well as fabrics for upholstery, soft furnishings and dressmaking. Her business is based in North London and she is a keen supporter of UK manufacturing, backing local businesses whenever she can. Emily Burningham designs are stocked nationwide, including at Liberty London, or you can buy them from her website.

My favourite room is...
my bedroom. It's a place to rest and restore – to shut away the hectic day and escape to a neutral space where one can tune back in. I like to be surrounded by a light and airy clutter-free room, with white bed linen, elegant furniture and vases of white flowers.

The thing I like best about my house is...
the curved glass and Crittall windows. The design, which is typical of 1930s architecture, lets in an abundance of light, making it an uplifting place to be all year round.

My favourite place in Britain is...
the Cornish coast. Many happy times have been spent walking along the beaches and coastal paths, or going for a surf in the freezing sea!

My favourite thing to do when I'm at home is...
sit on my balcony and look out over the trees and rooftops with either a cup of tea or a chilled glass of white wine, depending on the season.

My inspiration comes from...
a variety of sources. The English garden provides an endless source of inspiration, with its traditional plants and flowers and visiting birds and insects. My work is also strongly influenced by the The Arts and Crafts movement, the 1920s, Art Nouveau, Japanese design and the Scottish painters, to name but a few!

When decorating, work with a focal point and pull out the colours to help decide what to include in the room

When I'm decorating a room I always...
start with a lovely paint tone for the walls, often a soft or neutral colour. I love the Marston & Langinger range, which ties in perfectly with our textile collection. Then I introduce balanced colour and pattern, usually through curtains and accessories.

The worst design disaster I've ever had was...
with a new idea I had quite recently! I was trying a new textile design with a red background and bright green leaves – it was awful! No matter what you see in your mind's eye, sometimes you've got to realise that it just isn't going to work.

The current interiors trend I love most is...
1950s Scandinavian design – clean, fresh lines and beautiful furniture lift the spirits and freshen the palette.

I think the next interiors trend will be...
I am delighted that sustainability in design and beautiful interiors are no longer poles apart, and I think that the trend for using sustainable raw materials for fabrics and furniture will continue.

My top tip is...
when decorating a room, work with a focal point – either a theme such as a design era, or simply a favourite piece such as a painting, tile, pattern or cushion – and pull out the colours to help decide what to include in the room.

To see more of Emily's pretty textiles, head to emilyburningham.com or call 020 7431 0361



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The homely feel of Liz's living room comes from the combination of rustic pieces and the simple shapes and patterns in her furnishings.

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How Liz Hallam brought the rich natural colours of the





An antique writing desk is the perfect place to write a nature journal or letter home after a day exploring the great outdoors.

THE WILD

beautiful Scottish landscape indoors

Words **JANE CRITTENDEN/GAP INTERIORS** *Photography* **DOUGLAS GIBB/GAP INTERIORS**



Above There's no doubt that this is a cosy kitchen to linger in, thanks to the charming finds which catch the eye and the comforting feel of the Hallams wooden furniture.

The Scottish Highlands are one of the most romantic places in the world, with a magical atmosphere which gets under the skin of every visitor. Getting the Caledonian sleeper from Euston and waking up in Fort William is an adventure in itself, but the journey from Derbyshire up the M6 is not to be sniffed at either.

Liz Hallam, a landscape designer, and her husband Richard, know it well. They are based in Chesterfield with their two grown-up sons, Isaac and Joe, and have always holidayed in Scotland, more so since they built a house on the Isle of Mull, where they hope to retire soon.

Their second holiday home is Stag Cottage, in Polloch, one of the least explored villages of the West Highlands, around eight miles north of the village of Strontian. Property doesn't come up for sale in this location very often. The area is rich in history and offers the chance for residents to discover one of the last wildernesses. The village sits on the banks of the River Polloch, one of the most famous sea trout rivers in Argyll, which leads from Loch Sheil to Loch Doilean.

"We bought Stag Cottage because we won't want to live on Mull all the year around," says Liz. "When we started looking, our priority was to find somewhere that we could easily get to from the ferry terminal on the mainland. I was thrilled when I spotted the cottage on Right Move. The property had been built for the gamekeeper of the Glen Hurich estate in the late 19th-century and been updated over the years, but there was still plenty of potential."

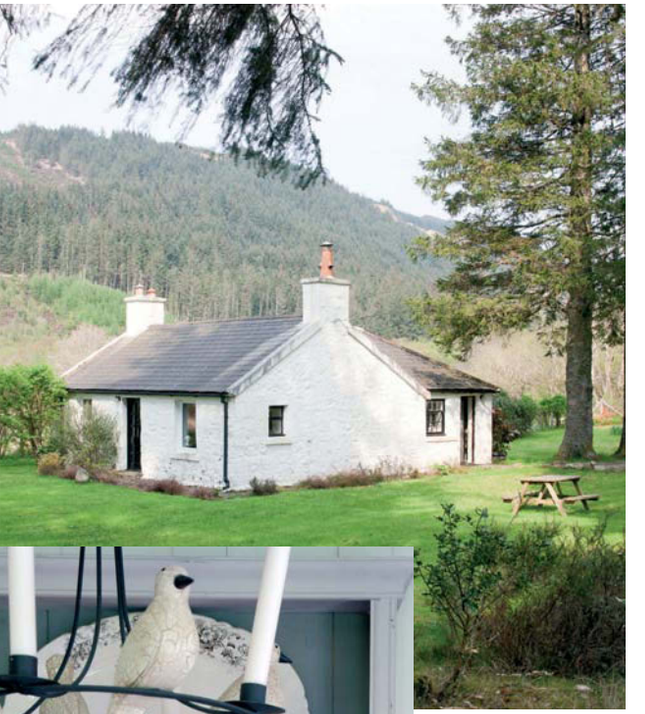
BEAUTY SPOT

"I was keen because I knew the cottage was incredibly remote and the scenery would be beautiful," Liz explains. "I knew if I loved the location I would love the house, after all – you can change anything in a house." The nearest town is Fort William, which is a 50 minute ferry journey across Loch Linnhe. There is a well-stocked store, craft shop and a pub in the village of Strontian – six miles away from the house – so Liz knew she might be secluded but she would never be totally isolated.





Above This leather arm chair was made for curling up in with a hot chocolate and losing yourself in a big fat novel.







Left Liz's kitchen lighting is a real talking point, and expresses her fun-loving nature. Her collection of vintage kitchenware is put to good use when rustling up tasty bakes for the family.



My treasured fabrics and furniture make this place special. We wanted the cottage to feel like an extension of our family home in Derbyshire



Richard, who is retired, was able to drive up to Scotland straight away while Liz was at work. He took photos of the cottage to show her and their offer was accepted the following day. When the couple became the proud owners of the property it was the first time Liz had actually seen the cottage – and she wasn't disappointed when she stepped inside.

The journey to her little hideaway gave her the chance to soak in some splendid scenery. "As we drove up and over the mountain road there were incredible views of the Highlands and Loch Doilet, and Stag Cottage was tucked away at the end of a forest track like a hidden gem," she says.

The two-bedroom cottage didn't need any structural work but was outdated with lots of orange pine cladding. The couple had made plans to fit a new kitchen and bathroom and re-decorate throughout, and Liz had already started thinking about the décor.

MATERIAL GIRL

She absolutely loves textiles and is very fond of old furniture and memorabilia. "I can't walk past a fabric shop without popping in for a look," she admits. "I also love visiting antiques shops and car boot sales. I can't stop buying fabric and I fall in love with old pieces – even if I don't know where I'm going to put them. I've got a stand now at my local flea market with the theory that I sell the things I can't keep so I've got room to buy



some more as I love my collections so much."

The landscape around Liz's new home inspired her new décor. "This area is rugged but has a very soft landscape too, so the colours are really watered down," she says. "My approach was to bring those muted shades of browns, greens, greys and heathers into the cottage."

Liz's starting point was sparked by a plaid wool throw she found in a shop near work in Matlock, made by Abraham Moon. The humble throw then became an even more important fixture, when her brother bought exactly the same one for her at Christmas! "It was uncanny," says Liz, "but he knows me well. The earthy colours are similar to the watery colours of the landscape and it was only right that the cottage should have some tartan."

TIMELESS APPEAL

Rather than add colour to the walls, Liz painted the traditional v-lined timber in shades of cream and stone, and introduced layers of the outdoor colours in tactile textiles such as sheepskin, wool, rugs and patterned fabrics. It is a subdued approach that matches the reflective and meditative mood here yet the cottage still feels cosy and warm.

"Being here is about relaxing, eating and drinking," she says. "We enjoy coming in winter time and going for walks when the skies are blue and the air is crisp. But it's lovely to come back, stick a few more logs in the wood burner, then cosy-up and read, or watch the pine martens in the garden."

The sitting room combines fabrics from Abraham Moon with blinds and a cushion from James Brindley of Harrogate. Matlock Antiques & Collectables supplied the bureau and candlesticks and combine well with finds from TX Maxx and Dunelm. Liz's talents came to the fore in her Ikea kitchen. She has an eye for finding quirky homewares such as the cute candelabra with the birds perched around the rim. Liz enjoys baking and can often be found in the kitchen on a wet day rustling up some goodies to eat.

She and Richard rent out the cottage as a holiday let (glenhurich.co.uk) so the bedrooms are simple and uncluttered. In the master bedroom guests can enjoy seeing the colours of the heather and bracken outside reflected in some pink and purple pops of colour.

The homely atmosphere of the cottage, notable in the array of memorabilia arranged artfully around the rooms, is not lost on visitors either. The old-fashioned edge is what gives it its charm and character, and ensures that guests keep coming back. "Often people say coming to Stag Cottage is like stepping back in time," says Liz. "I think it is the solitude that makes people feel like that. We're so far from the modern world and there's no mobile reception; all there is to do is admire and enjoy the great outdoors and we love doing that."



Period Ideas says

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Little surprise then, that TV presenter, engineer, inventor and acknowledged sustainability expert Dick Strawbridge is a big Rayburn fan. Dick, presenter of *Two Hungry Sailors*, *Scrapheap Challenge* and a *Celebrity Master Chef* finalist – is thrilled to be linked to a kitchen icon with a proud heritage.

He says, "When I was given the opportunity to be an ambassador for Rayburn, I didn't hesitate. I have always been proud of being British, and unsurprisingly, as an engineer I know the value of owning and using quality tools. Having a Rayburn just makes sense to me – who wouldn't choose the best of British engineering that is designed and built to last?"



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An artist's retreat

Lindy Brockway reveals how she renovated her Edwardian property to serve as both her home and studio

Words **JULIET BAWDEN/GAP INTERIORS** *Photography* **NICK CARTER/GAP INTERIORS**









Above With its dazzling white Aga and a new cupboard surround, designed to minimise the impact of the large fridge, the kitchen area has been designed so that it blends in seamlessly with the dining and sitting space.

Finding the perfect balance between home and work life is something which many of us strive for, in order to get the best of both worlds. One way to achieve such harmony is to unite them within one space, and bring your work into your home. For artist Lindy Brockway, merging these two areas has enabled her to showcase her creations and decorate her home in an entirely unique and personal way.

She was determined to be a hands-on mum, at least while her children were small, so her drawing, painting and sculpting took a back seat. It wasn't until her five sons were older that Lindy considered how she could use a house to be more than just a home. "I was at a stage in my life where my children were grown up and I was ready for some 'me' time," Lindy says. "I thought about moving, and I'd been looking for somewhere to live that would be a home, gallery and studio – all in one place. I saw this house and loved it. The problem was, it really wasn't big enough to accommodate five growing lads and me."

Despite falling for the property, an Edwardian home in South London, Lindy had to ignore her heart and continue with the search. Not long after she viewed the house, the owners withdrew it from sale.

A year passed and during this time her eldest sons began to leave home, as they secured their own properties. As luck would have it, the house came back on the market, and so she and her two youngest sons, 21 year old twins Ludo and Milo, moved in.



Above Lindy's sons are all musically gifted, and the three who no longer live at home often stop by for a jamming session with their brothers. Lindy found the white grand piano on the internet, and the piece really sets off the room.

REFRESH AND REVIVE

The property had been a busy family home for the last twenty years and was looking tired and dated, with chintzy features such as floral wallpaper featuring heavily throughout. It wasn't the décor that attracted Lindy though – she was captivated by a room at the back of the house. The large space has high ceilings and French doors leading out onto the garden, as well as a beautiful parquet floor. It was in a sorry state when Lindy arrived, with worn varnish and grubby patches, but a quick sanding and coating of oil soon made it gleam again.

In fact, Lindy describes most of the work she did to the house as being superficial. Rather than stripping it bare and filling it with brand new furniture and objects, she and the twins decided to reinvent what was already there. There were, however, a few structural changes needed, in order to make the most of the space. "I took out the hall as it was divided in half with a lobby, and what should have been an elegant sweep was broken up, so I changed it," Lindy explains. "There were lots of little rooms upstairs on the very top floor, four bedrooms and a bathroom, so I turned them into two spacious bedrooms and a sitting room." The only other major job Lindy needed to do was to put in gas log fires. This meant having all the chimneys relined – a costly but worthwhile investment, especially when the winter chill takes hold.

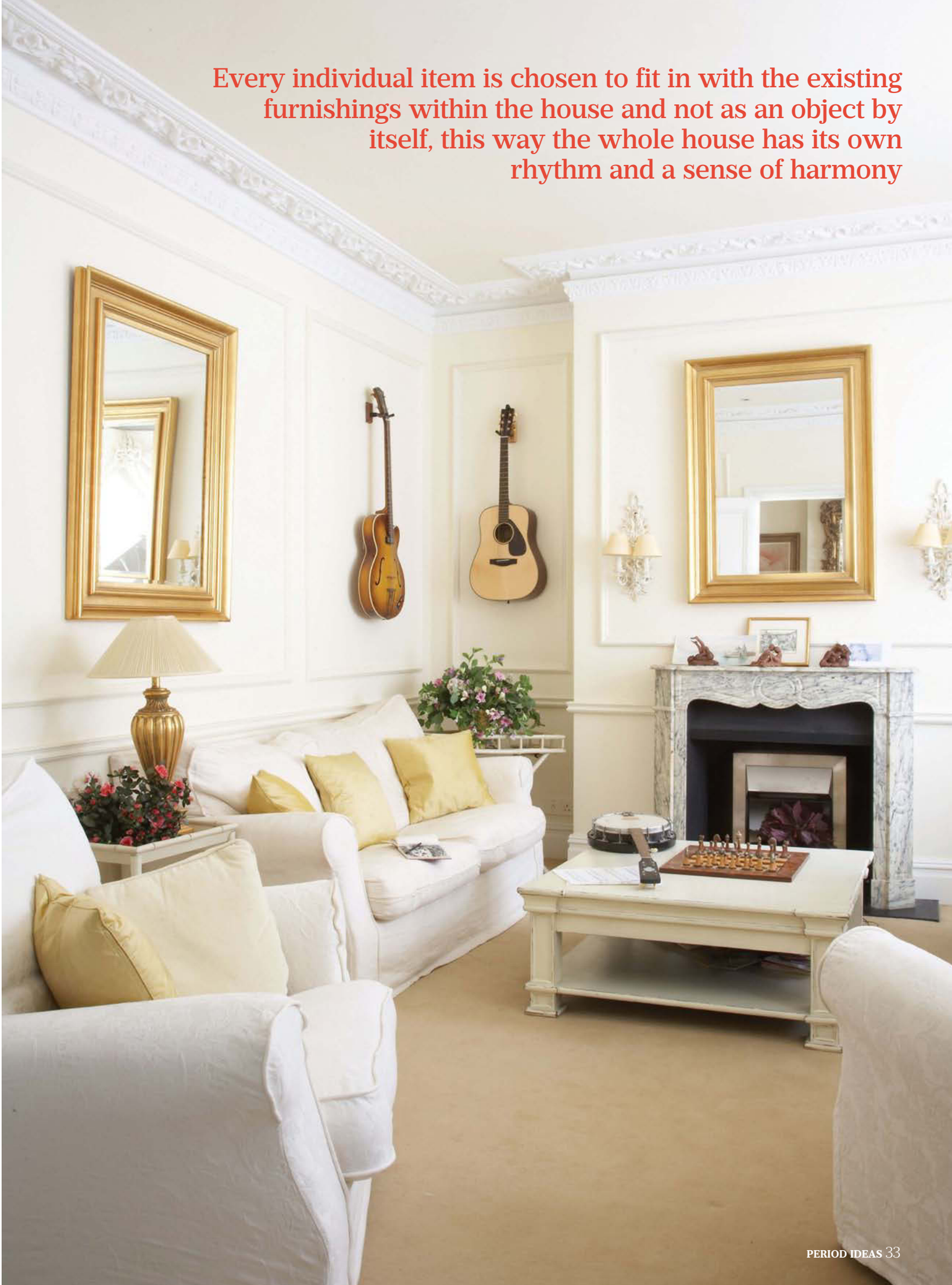
After replacing the garish floral wallpaper with a neutral colour, she set about removing the scuffs and marks that had been left by years of wear. The marble work in the bathroom came back to life with a sand down and polish, and the dated cherry pine kitchen cupboards got a much-needed refresh with a lick of cream paint. Lindy replaced the gaudy kitchen tiles with sophisticated cream options from Fired Earth and flexed her crafty muscles by making all the curtains herself.

Once the house was revamped, Lindy turned her attention to the garden, installing a water feature to give the grounds a focal point. Candles, mirrors and bamboo create a tropical, tranquil ambience, transporting visitors away from the hubbub









Every individual item is chosen to fit in with the existing furnishings within the house and not as an object by itself, this way the whole house has its own rhythm and a sense of harmony



COLOUR MATCH

Rather than settling for a store-bought shade, Lindy used trial and error to create the perfect hue for her home

When it comes to choosing a colour for your design scheme, carefully consider all the elements in the room, and try to find a tone which runs throughout all of the pieces. There's no need to match everything perfectly, but in order to achieve a harmonious space, there needs to be a sense of continuity.

"Look at your property in its entirety and not as single rooms," Lindy explains. "Once you've selected your fabric, choose the same colour for your walls - so that the space flows. The paint I've used is my own mixture, and is the result of lots of tests! As soon as I had the right shade, which is very close to calico, I took it to a decorator who matched it for me and mixed up larger quantities so that I could use it throughout my home."

Above Lindy considers her pond to be her best buy, and she finds that it brings her great pleasure and happiness, particularly during stressful moments. She loves the light, life and tranquility that water brings into a garden.

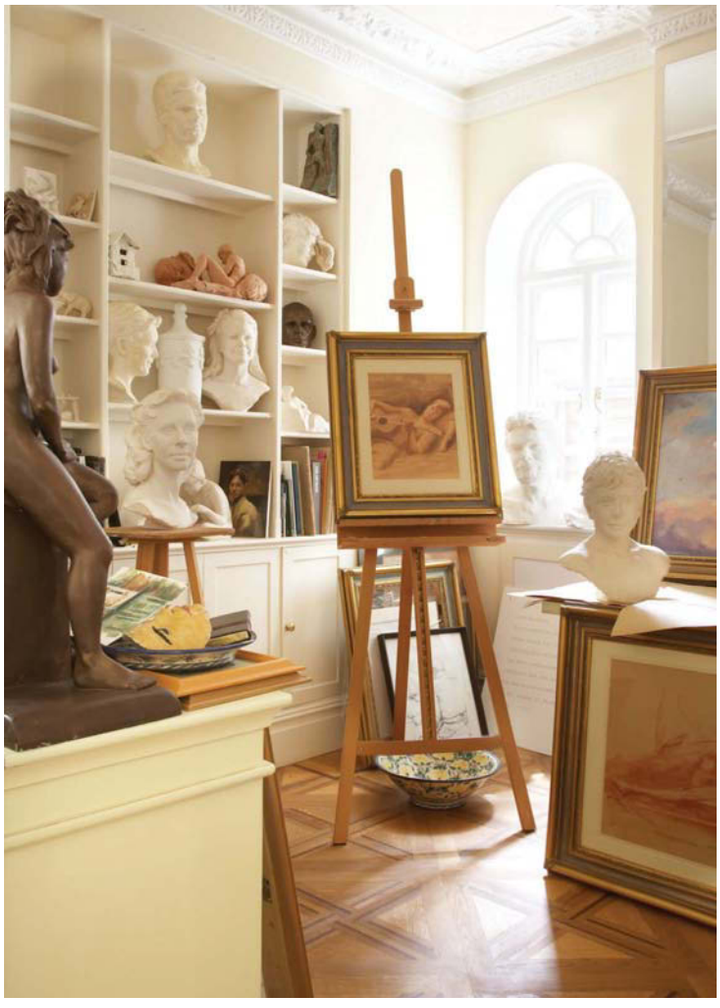
of the city to a peaceful zen garden. What Lindy wanted, and has managed to achieve, is an indoor and outdoor space that exist together harmoniously, with one complementing the other.

VIEWING GALLERY

The boldness and panache of Lindy's house makes it stand out from more conventional properties. The distinct decorative choices and artwork she has displayed help to tell the story of her life. "I see my home as an alfresco studio that reflects the journey I have made, from a wife and mother to where I am now – living the life of a working artist," she says.

Many artists who practise their craft at home view their living spaces as laboratories – places to gather materials and test ideas. Through her selection of furniture, artefacts, patterns and textures, Lindy has assembled her house to fit around her work, and, more importantly, to showcase it. "I have designed the house as a backdrop to my work, therefore the entire scheme is tonal – with very little colour in either the interior or exterior. The neutral scheme frames the paintings and sculptures to their best advantage, as well as providing a comfortable and welcoming space for clients and patrons. I want visitors and prospective buyers to see the work in a real, lived-in environment, so that they can imagine how it would look in their own homes."









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DANISH DELIGHT

FAMILY TREE

Artist Jet-te Ranning has respectfully restored a country house that has been in her family for generations

Words **ABIGAIL EDWARDS/NARRATIVES**
Photography & styling **ALUN CALLENDER/NARRATIVES**

"There's no place like home" might be an old cliché, but it still rings true for Artist Jet-te Ranning. Having lived in Paris, Stockholm, New York, Cologne and Barcelona, she made sure to come home every Christmas to spend time with her nearest and dearest. Now she's back in Denmark – and her family home – for good.

Jet-te comes from the island of Fyn (or Funen, to us Brits), located between mainland Denmark and the island of Zealand, where you'll find Copenhagen. She lives here with her children, Nora, 15, and Luca, 6, and their cats, Stella and Hugo.

RETURN TO YOUR ROOTS

The house she lives in was built in 1772, and has been in Jet-te's family since the 1950s. "I grew up 20km away, and as a child I would often get the bus down at weekends to see my grandparents, who lived here before me," she says. "It was passed down to my brother, two sisters and I, but I had such fond memories of the place that I bought their shares from them so I could come here whenever I wanted. For a long time I used it as a country hideaway when I visited Denmark, but now we live here permanently."

The property is situated in Ringe, about half an hour's drive away from Fyn's main city, Odense. "Originally it was a schoolhouse," says Jet-te. "When my grandparents bought it, the dining room was still set up as a classroom, even though the school had closed a couple of years before. The old schoolteacher still occupied two of the rooms, which were divided off from the rest of the house, and now serve as the living room and the study."

When Jet-te inherited the house, her grandmother had been living there alone for several years, so it needed a lot of work. "I moved absolutely everything out so that we could insulate every single external wall," says Jet-te. "I also had the thatch roof redone, and added dormer windows so that one day I can have an extra guest room and a study in the attic."

Sadly, the old doors were in a terrible state, so Jet-te had new ones made to look exactly like the originals, but without the draughts. "I left all the old windows as they were," she says. "But we had secondary glazing handmade and fitted inside. Nothing could be bought off the shelf as all the measurements are so wonky, so everything is bespoke. I also added a new window in the dining room where the external school door was, and thankfully the original staircase was in good condition, so it just needed sanding."

SPACE SAVING

The layout has largely been kept as Jet-te's grandparents had it, with all of the rooms serving the same purpose. "Even my chair and desk is in the same spot that my grandmother would sit and work!" says Jet-te. "However, there were some features that had to be changed, as they just weren't practical. The living room was dominated by a grand piano, as my grandmother was a pianist. Unfortunately, it was just taking up too much space and we had no use for it, so we found it a new home."

Another change Jet-te made was to knock through a wall dividing the kitchen and the pantry, in order to open up the space. The new, larger kitchen holds the original stove that was



Below Even in winter, Jet-te and the family will sit outside, wrapped in blankets and reindeer skins with lanterns burning. The trees outside the house are hung with lanterns to welcome guests.







The building was originally a schoolhouse, with the dining room being used as a classroom









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Left The cherry wood bench in the living room used to be in Jet-te's great grandmother's dressing room, while the antique leather chair was part of her great grandfather's Chesterfield suite.

installed when the house was built. "I found newspapers in it from the 1960s, so that must be when it was last lit," says Jet-te. "The chimneys were not working so I had them rebuilt, as I was keen to use the stove for cooking. I found all of the missing parts for it in the small barn in the garden. Luckily, my grandmother was like me in that she never threw anything out."

The kitchen units are also her grandmother's, but they were shifted along to accommodate a small folding breakfast table in the corner. The sink came from Jet-te's previous flat in Paris, and she found the hand-painted tiles, which now reside above the stove, in a house in Majorca that was about to be torn down. "I am planning to modernise the kitchen slightly, but it will look very similar to how it does now, as it suits the house," says Jet-te. "It will just be more practical. I would love a dishwasher."

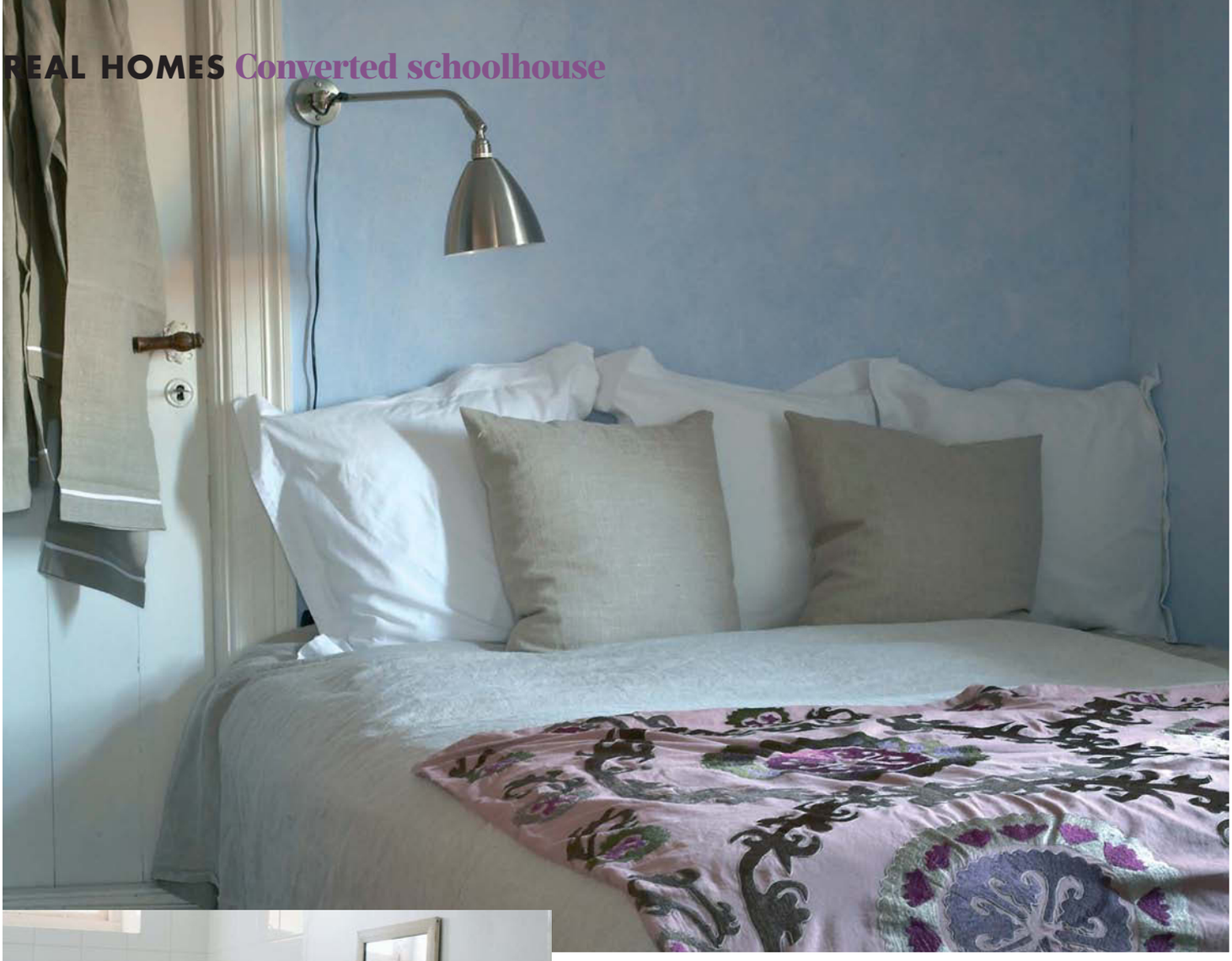
LESSONS LEARNED

The influence of Jet-te's jet-set lifestyle can be seen throughout the interiors. "In every place I've lived, my home or my studio has been located close to flea markets," she explains. "So I can't help but pick things up for the house while I'm there researching for my work."

In the living room, she covered the traditional sofas with simple white covers, but added flashes of colour with the orange silk cushions bought at an antiques market in Barcelona. "I found the late 19th-century coffee table hidden away in the hay-barn of a manor house near to where I buy eggs," says Jet-te. "Previously it was a kitchen table, but I asked a local carpenter to shorten the legs for me."

The melting pot of global pieces continues in the dining room, with shells picked up in Long Island, napkins from a flea market in Barcelona and Spanish candlesticks that were a present from Nora. "The metal table and bowl were bought in Morocco, while the dining table and chairs were handmade for my grandparents when they got married," says Jet-te.











CUSTOM MADE

Many of Jet-te's Christmas memories are strongly linked to the house, and consequently the festive season is a really important time for the family. "I've spent many Christmases here, so I make sure we carry on the family traditions," she says. "We always decorate the tree on December 23rd, but don't light the candles until Christmas Eve."

Respecting traditions is very important to Jet-te, whether it's getting together for family festivities or preserving this ancient home. "Thatched houses like this are an important part of Danish culture, but they are slowly disappearing because of the cost," she says. "I haven't got loads of money, but it is a lifestyle choice for me. Everything I do is in the style and the spirit of the house's heritage and I'm sure that when my children take over, they will carry on that spirit."

THE BIG DAY

For Danes, Christmas Eve – or Juleaften – is the most significant day of the festive season.

"We spend the morning wrapping presents, and in the afternoon we eat traditional rice pudding made with milk, cinnamon and sugar and one almond hidden in it," explains Jet-te. "Whoever finds the almond receives a marzipan pig. Then we all dance around the tree and sing, before opening presents and finally tucking into a big meal of duck, stuffed with prunes and apples. Christmas day is a much more relaxed affair. We always go for a walk together, whether it's raining, snowing or there's a huge storm."

Right Jet-te added the stove in the living room. It is a reproduction of an old design, similar to the one that would have been there originally.



Our tree is covered with glass animals and birds, the oldest being a 150-year-old swan that I inherited from my grandmother

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BARN CONVERSION

Home for CHRISTMAS

A family's special journey to their perfect property was over just in time for Santa

Words **CELIA RUFEY/NARRATIVES**
Photography **POLLY ELTES/NARRATIVES**

You could search high and low for your dream house and still not find what you are looking for. But there are those rare times when everything seems to just fall into place – and luckily that is exactly what happened for Emma and John Sims-Hilditch. Back in 1992, Emma and John drove around every village in Wiltshire in pursuit of their first home. Fortunately, it wasn't long before they stumbled across a forgotten treasure.

"We stopped in our tracks when we saw three derelict cottages with a small barn attached, in the heart of a perfect village," Emma says. "The property wasn't for sale and we had to discover who owned it before we could ask if we could buy it." The cottages in question date back to 1790 and are Grade II listed. They had been used intermittently as a dwelling and then a schoolroom, before being left empty. Despite their neglected state, many anxious months passed before the owner finally agreed to sell. Emma and John then spent a year restoring and renovating the cottages to give themselves a three-bedroom home with a kitchen and sitting room. The barn was a dream in waiting.

SPACE TO GROW

Fast forward 15 years and they are now a busy family of five. Emma runs her own interior design practice, John is co-owner of Neptune, the classic English furniture company, and they have three beautiful children, Daisy, Betty and Bill. The couple soon realised that they needed more space to cater for their growing family, and were granted permission to fulfil their dream and rebuild the barn as an open-plan living space.

They raised the roof of the barn to its original height and arranged the interior to give a double height seating area in one half, and a new upper storey in the other. This allowed





Left Getting ready for Christmas is thirsty work so John is delighted that there is a fine selection in the wine cellar. The look of the kitchen is softened by painted furniture and the simple rustic appeal of the bricks and Yuletide greenery.

them to gain a master bedroom and bathroom above the dining and kitchen areas. The new home boasts five bedrooms, three bathrooms, an open-plan kitchen-diner-living space, a beautiful garden room, cosy winter sitting room, two offices and a wine cellar.

"Our aim was to create a building that looked as though it been there for generations," Emma says. "We took a lot of inspiration from Belgian properties, particularly the work of the Belgian interior architect Axel Vervoordt. His use of building materials inspired us in so many ways. When reconstructing the barn we used reclaimed Cotswold stone worked by master masons. I simply adore the texture of stone against the sisal and wood floorings that run throughout adjoining areas.

"The European theme is further complemented by the furniture that John has designed, and the soft neutrals I chose for painted walls and furnishing linens. We used a lot of new wood too, but blended it with the interior by colour-washing it with thinned paint. This proved an inexpensive way to obtain a beautiful limed effect. The huge glazed barn doors beckon floods of light into the surrounding area, something we'd never had in the cottage before."

CHRISTMAS COUNTDOWN

The work on the barn and the knock-on re-organisation of the rooms took nearly two years to complete, and was finished just in time for Christmas. "We always like to decorate in time for Daisy's birthday on the 14th December," Emma explains.

"At Christmas, our lighting system actually pays second fiddle to candles – lots of them. But I was most excited about having a living room that could accommodate a three metre





STYLE ADVICE

Keep it simple

"Our aim was to create a building that looked as though it had been there for generations, We took a lot of inspiration from Belgian properties and architects"



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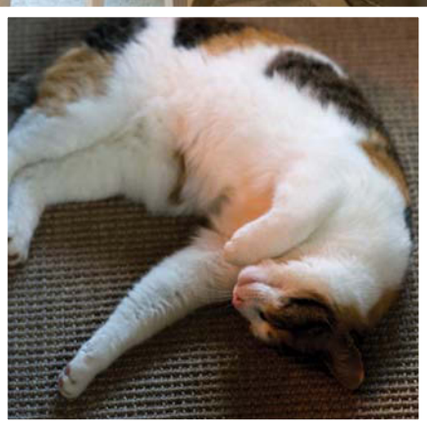
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Left Emma's home is a lesson in how less is often more in an older property. The large four poster bed gives the master bedroom a Scandi feel, and the timber roof ensures an open, treehouse feel.

high tree! So, whilst shopping in Belgium, I combed the shelves of countless shops, until I eventually found a set of charming hand-sewn tree decorations from the luxury concept store, Flamant. I also bought a second tree, though I used it in an entirely different way. It was a Nordman fir, famous for the fact that it doesn't drop its needles. I cut off all the branches and laid them artistically on top of our cabinets, as well as dressing the stairs with them. It was a cost-effective way to decorate on a big scale."

With increased space at last, Emma and John can now invite extended family and friends to join them for the festivities. On Christmas Eve, Emma precedes the big Yuletide feast with a simple supper of grilled raclette cheese, using a machine she bought in the French Alps. "It's such a brilliant, easy meal for a crowd," she smiles. On Christmas morning, the family wakes and everyone opens their stockings, a tradition started by Emma's mother.

PERSONAL TOUCH

For the first big family Christmas under one roof, Emma's mother marked the occasion by ordering personalised Volga Linen stockings for her nine grandchildren. Now every Christmas is a reminder of how far they have come on their journey to a special home, and they give thanks at the early service in the village church. Then it's back for brunch and swiftly on to opening presents under the tree. "We sit down to Christmas dinner in the garden room at dusk," says Emma. "We chose the Sheldrake table that John designed for Neptune for that room, because it's hugely extendable so we can always seat a crowd. In the evening we play games, anything from charades to Pictionary."

Those who prefer a quiet post-prandial hour can relax in the winter sitting room. It's a spectacularly cosy retreat crowned by a beamed ceiling, and featuring a wonderfully rustic wood-burning stove, wool plaid curtains, and walls painted milk chocolate brown. "Our home celebrates contemporary living with its use of glass, controlled lighting and underfloor heating" says Emma, "but it's designed using natural materials and related colours. A house in the country should always be understated and never showy – except perhaps at Christmas."

FRESH APPROACH

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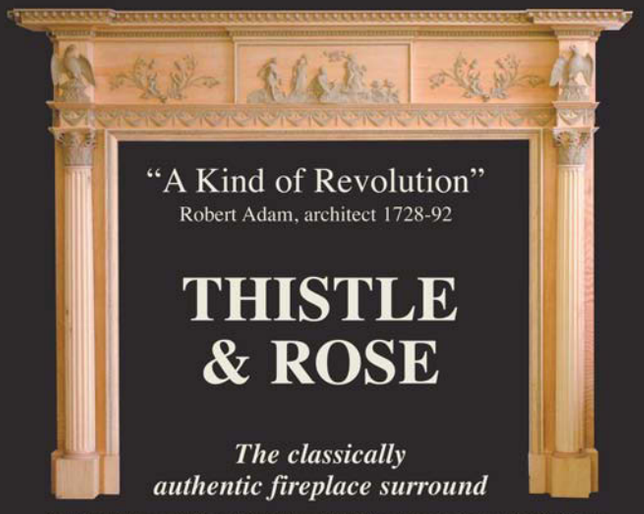
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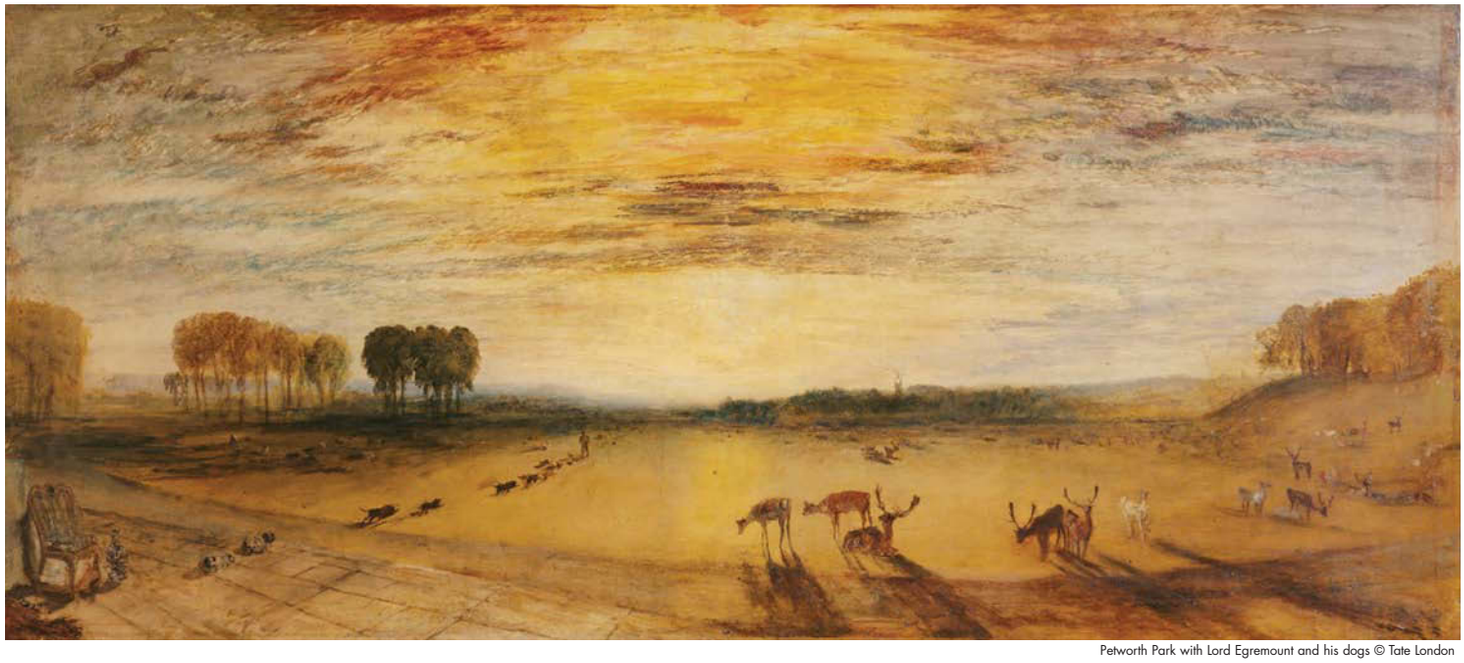
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A brush with fame

Andrew Loukes reveals the part Petworth House played in JMW Turner's life

Words **SUSAN DICKERSON**



Petworth Park with Lord Egremount and his dogs © Tate London



NTPL/Andreas Von Einsiedel

Above The marble hall at Petworth is one of the many splendid rooms visitors can admire at this splendid Sussex mansion, which was once filled with artists and sculptors.

If J.M.W Turner could be deified, I'd make him Janus, god of beginnings and transitions. Joseph Mallord William made his name at 21, with the exhibition of his first oil painting *Fishermen at Sea*, at the Royal Academy in 1796. His work crackles with intensity. It still colours our view of the 19th century and what it is to live in rapidly changing times.

"Turner has his own unique energy and keeps us fascinated," says Andrew Loukes, curator at Petworth House, which is holding 'Mr Turner – an exhibition' this January. "Like Dickens and Picasso, he was very much a man of his time but his work transcends it. Today, just as in his own era, he polarises opinion and provokes a reaction. He is very Marmite. My parents had a reproduction of *Chichester Canal* and as a child I was bewildered by it– the image was so weird. Little did I know it was Turner's first painting of the Petworth estate and that one day I would work here."

The exhibition has been inspired by Mike Leigh's award-winning film, *Mr Turner*, filmed in part at Petworth House and Park, in West Sussex. The property was transformed into a house of art by George O'Brien Wyndham, the 3rd Earl of Egremount, who commissioned Turner to paint for him and regularly had artists to stay.

This means you can view 20 paintings in their natural location at Petworth, including the landscapes made for the famous Carved Room, designed by Grinling Gibbons and extended by the 3rd Earl. The studio used by Turner and other artists in the early 19th century, which is usually off limits, will also be open to the public. A selection of props and costumes from the film will be on display as well as paintings by Timothy Spall in preparation for his role as Turner.



JMW Turner by John Phillip © National Portrait Gallery



Chateau de Nantes by JMW Turner © Ashmolean Museum

"Turner arrived at Petworth in 1809," says Andrew. "The 3rd Earl had a strong and representative collection of British art and wanted to add to it. We think that they would have met in London – but we don't have any correspondence as unlike Constable, Turner was a 'doer', not a writer and a lot of letters have been lost. Turner made sketches, went fishing and produced plenty of paintings for the Earl.

"He was up very early and would seldom sit and do nothing, I think his drawing was compulsive and most of it was private, not intended to be shown. The sheer volume of his work is overwhelming. By the late 1820s and 1830s, Turner often came to Petworth for a break. It was an open house filled with fellow artists such as George Jones and the sculptor Francis Chantrey."

Andrew thinks Turner's legacy lies in the extent of his preparation for his private work. "He was incredibly old school and his subject matter was actually very conventional.

Turner was the first modern artist. Different people were buying art and he took advantage of this. He sold to aristocrats and industrialists



Carved room with four Turner landscapes © NTPL/ Bill Batten

PICTURE THIS

Mr Turner – an exhibition runs from 10 January – 11 March 2015. You can book tickets online at **nationaltrust.org.uk/petworth** or call **0844 229 1895**. Please remember to buy your tickets to the exhibition in advance and book early, to avoid disappointment. Please note that tickets cannot be bought on the door.



Timothy Spall as Turner © Simon Mein and Thin Man Films

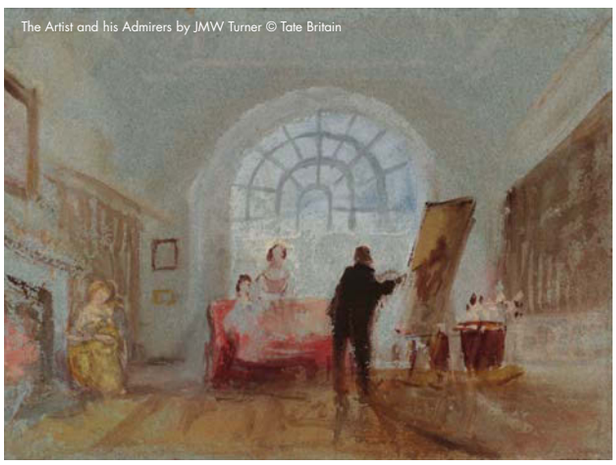


The Port of London by JMW Turner © Victoria and Albert Museum

He tackled the great themes of classic art, as outlined by Sir Joshua Reynolds," says Andrew. "Turner's techniques puzzled people and although his painting process is often admired by fans of Impressionistic and Abstract art, his emphasis was really on telling a meaningful story."

Petworth has been a family home for over 800 years and was remodelled in the baroque style by Charles Seymour, the 6th Duke of Somerset, following his marriage to an heiress. But the Proud Duke's formal gardens fell out of favour 50 years later, when Capability Brown worked his magic to create the deer park we admire today.

Turner's patron, the 3rd Earl, was quite a character. He inherited Petworth at the tender age of 11, and land in Ireland from his uncle in his 20s. He championed canal building, agricultural innovations, bred livestock and racehorses, promoted emigration, brought gas to Petworth village and avoided matrimony. His annual income was estimated at the equivalent of £10mn in today's money and it was said he spent one fifth of it on charitable causes every year.



The Artist and his Admirers by JMW Turner © Tate Britain

Egremount combined running his estates with a busy private life, allegedly fathering 40 children by 15 mistresses. He married Elizabeth Ilive, mother of seven of his children, after he turned 50. But there was no happy ending. Their only legitimate child died in infancy and the Earl couldn't stay faithful to Elizabeth. The couple separated permanently after two years of marriage and Elizabeth moved to London.

Petworth passed to the Earl's nephew after his death in 1837 and it stayed in his family until death duties and debts threatened to bankrupt them in 1952. In an echo of the 3rd Earl's generosity and appreciation of the arts, once the house had been accepted by the National Trust, much of the art collection was given in lieu of tax to the nation, so the works stayed at Petworth, on view to the public. In return the family live in one third of the house, and retain part of the estate. The current Lord Egremont, is better known as Max Egremont, the novelist and biographer.

Turner still polarises opinion and provokes a reaction. Like Dickens and Picasso, he was very much a man of his time but his work is for all time

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KNOCK ON WOOD

Collectables

Margaret Powling shares the secrets of treen, one of the most tactile antiques



There is currently a fashion in many dining establishments for presenting food on anything but a plain, round plate. First it was the square plate, then an oblong of clouded glass, and now it's a slab of slate or a chunk of wood. I wonder how many chefs, or their customers, are aware that this 'innovative' presentation is firmly rooted – literally – in the past? In the days before the mass-production of ceramics, wood was used to serve all food, even in wealthy households. Thus, as trends always tend to do, it has come full circle.

MASS PRODUCTION

Derived from an archaic word for 'wooden', treen is a generic term for items made of wood. Although most references use it to describe small, turned wooden objects, you can cast aside any romantic notions that such items were whittled away by the local village carpenter. Jonathan Levi, author of *Treen for the Table*, explains. "It is now clear that workshops of varying sizes produced large numbers of similar objects," he says.

"One only has to look at the pictures of chairs in the Chilterns being taken to market, or bodgers in the beech woods, or local markets with piles of bowls and ladles for sale, to understand the scale of production of some items by particular workshops."

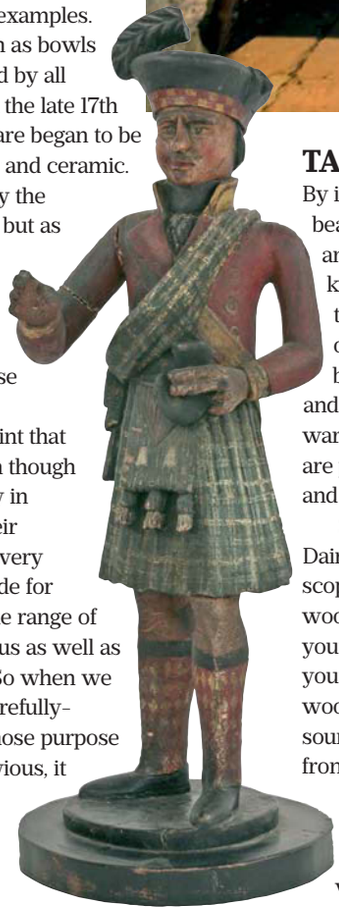
According to Edward Pinto (1901–1972), whose accumulation of more than 7,000 treen items – widely regarded as the most important collection of its kind – now resides in the City of Birmingham Museum, "the term [treen] never seems to have been applied to furniture or other cabinet-made goods or objects such as carved wooden figures, designed primarily for ornament." Today, treen refers to items of limited size and not of joined construction, so continues to exclude not only furniture, but large boxes too.

PRACTICAL PURPOSES

Instrumental in the production of turned wood items was the pole lathe which, according to Levi, was introduced to England by the Iron Age Celtic people in around 200BC. As collectors, we cherish the traces left by skilled pole lathe turners, but can only use these traces for dating purposes in combination with stylistic considerations, based on documented or dated examples.

Some objects, such as bowls and platters, were used by all classes of society until the late 17th century, when tableware began to be made in silver, pewter and ceramic. These were adopted by the wealthy to begin with, but as they became more commonplace, the wooden service was seldom used by anyone other than those of humble means.

One interesting point that Levi raises is that even though we may have difficulty in discerning some of their functions nowadays, every piece of treen was made for a specific purpose. "The range of specialisation amazes us as well as attracts us," he says. "So when we are confronted by a carefully-turned object now, whose purpose is not immediately obvious, it challenges our imagination to try to understand why our ancestors created it."



TAKE TURNS

By its very nature, some woods 'turn' beautifully but are unsuited for carving, and vice versa. Woods used in the kitchen and for eating and drinking have to be free of strong or unpleasant odours or flavours. They also need to be able to withstand cycles of wetting and drying without roughening, splitting or warping. Most importantly some woods are poisonous – such as yew or iroko – and totally unsuitable for domestic wares.

So what might collectors look for? Dairy and eating products offer plenty of scope or, if textiles interest you, bobbins or wool winders are also popular items. If your main interest is the wood itself, build your collection using objects of the same wood or take a geographical approach – sourcing items made of exotic timbers from across the globe. Just remember, accurate dating of treen is often difficult – a very worn or neglected bowl can look far older than a well-preserved one twice its age!





Far left
An 1883 Scandinavian turned softwood beer bowl, sold for £360, **sworder.co.uk**

Left
An early 19th century carved and painted tobacconist shop figure, sold for £3000, **sworder.co.uk**

Above right
17th century turned lignum vitae mortar, together with lignum vitae tapering, **bonhams.com**

Right
A 19th century walnut cheese mould, sold for £340, **sworder.co.uk**

Far right
A Norwegian burr birch tankard, late 17th century, sold for £9,800, **sworder.co.uk**

Margaret's Excellent Advice

Discover how to preserve and protect your wooden items with our expert's top tips:

Ensure that any object you introduce to your home is free from woodworm. Items that show any sign of activity should be treated with one of the proprietary preparations (which are easy to use).

Some consider treen to look its best when waxed and polished. The advantage of this is that the wax helps to preserve the wood and its colour, as the grain and patination is enhanced.

Take care that your treen does not dry out in a centrally heated home. Adequate humidification is essential for antique wooden items.

Polished items, particularly those which are handled regularly, may need occasional buffing with a soft duster or chamois leather to remove finger marks and revive the shine. Intricately carved items can easily be damaged by over-zealous cleaning - a soft hogs-hair brush is therefore advised.





DIARY DATES

- **The Cheshire Decorative Antiques & Art Fair, Tatton Park, 2nd–4th January**

If you want to get your hands on stylish, inspirational and highly desirable art, antiques and period accessories, don't miss this fabulous event. Combining everything from furniture and garden statuary to art and jewellery, 40 specialist exhibitors will make this show an unforgettable opportunity for interior designers, home decorators and collectors. Should your hunting leave you peckish, there is an on-site licensed bar serving tea, coffee and cake, as well as a restaurant within Tatton Park itself. Tickets are £5, open 11am–5pm daily. 01278 784 912, cooperevents.com

- **The Mayfair Antiques & Fine Art Fair, The London Marriott Hotel, 8th–11th January**

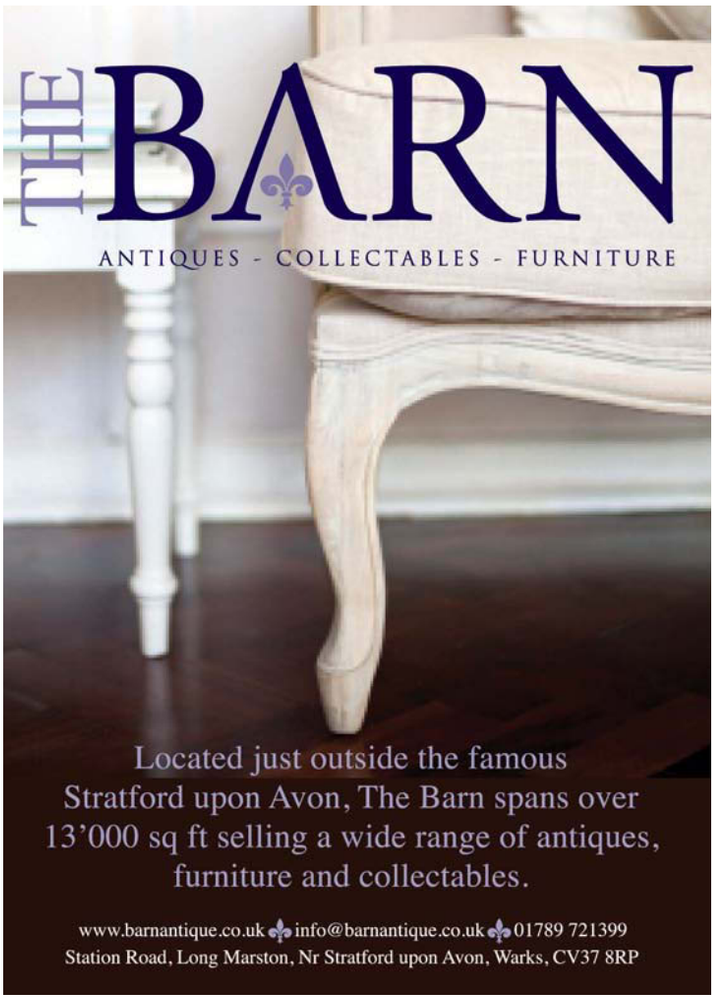
For the third year in a row, this fantastic event is taking place in the heart of Mayfair – the perfect central location for antiques fans across the country. Featuring 44 renowned exhibitors, the fair has boasted an exhibitor waiting list long before the first event even took place, so you can be sure that there are plenty of amazing treasures just waiting to be snapped up. Tickets are £10 and includes a catalogue. Open from 12pm–9pm on Thursday, 11am–6pm on Friday and Saturday and 11am–5pm on Sunday. 01797 252 030, mayfairfair.com

- **Petwood Hotel Antiques Fair, Lincolnshire, 15th January**

Set in the stunning grounds of the Petwood Hotel, you'll find antique treats galore at this amazing show. With up to 30 top-quality stall holders displaying their wares, there is a rich variety on offer, making this fair a must-visit. Plus, if you want to make your day even more enjoyable, you can indulge in refreshments at the hotel, a charming Edwardian building, with all the modern facilities you will need. Tickets are £2, open from 9.30am–4pm. 0777 234 9431, fielddogfairs.com

- **Durham Antiques, Vintage & Retro Fair, New College Durham, 25th January**

Bringing together exhibitors from all areas of the world of collectables, you'll be delighted by the warm and friendly atmosphere at this one-day event. Over 160 stands will be brimming with home furnishings, collectors items, vintage jewellery, clothes, antique tools, militaria, watches and plenty more, so you're guaranteed to find something to take home with you. Tickets are £1.50 (just 60p for students), open from 10am–4pm. 0191 261 9632, ccevents.net





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STYLE EDIT

Interiors that inspire, objects of desire, and the very finest of this season's shopping

Compiled by **CHARLOTTE BARBER** *Edited by* **SEOANA SHERRY-BRENNAN**



JANUARY'S MUST-HAVES

Take inspiration from the latest trends and best buys to **BREATHE NEW LIFE** *into your home for 2015. Discover a* **STATEMENT OBJECT** *to form the centrepiece of your new scheme and don't miss our top tips for incorporating* **ART DECO** *style into your interiors. We're also celebrating the trend for* **FOLK-INSPIRED** *designs with our favourite high street pieces, and coveting* **COSY KNITS** *– perfect for warming up your home this winter*

Luxury fix

The latest stylish finds and designer details for your home this season





SHORE THING

Carefully crafted from hundreds of ceramic shells, this impressive design is a strong style statement, and gives a nod to the beautiful British coast. Ideal for properties by the sea or for city-dwelling homeowners with a passion for the shore, the Mojo lamp is priced at £385 and the shade is sold separately, for £110. ***020 7351 3003, pooky.com***

PURPLE POWER

Inspired by Pantone's soothing 'Lavender Herb' tone, Couch has revealed two brand new additions to its ever-growing collection of stylish furniture. The Bronte four-seat sofa, priced at £1,145, will make a superb addition to any living space this winter, and there is also a matching club chair, priced at £595, should you require extra seating. Coloured in Flanders Lavender, each piece in the range boasts gently curved arms, turned wooden feet and a deep button-back, for the ultimate in luxurious looks and cosy comfort. **01495 717 170, couch.co.uk**



FINE DINING

Royal Crown Derby has just launched a new colourway in its popular Bristol Belle tableware range. 'Burnt Orange' combines an exotic blend of shimmering gold set against a backdrop of warm rust. Perfect for formal dinnerware in either a classic or contemporary scheme, the patterned fine bone china is painstakingly hand-finished in 22ct gold. Prices start at £72 for a tea saucer. **01332 712 833, royalcrownderby.co.uk**

BATHING BEAUTY

The classic shape and polished metal finish of the new Nickel Bateau from Catchpole & Rye creates a striking centrepiece. Made from copper with a hard-wearing compound to maintain the mirrored finish and withstand the rigours of daily use, bathtime just got much better. Priced from £5,400, Catchpole & Rye. ***020 7351 0940, catchpoleandrye.com***



STYLISH SLUMBER



Refresh your sleeping space with the new collection from Vispring. Entirely handmade, each mattress is filled by hand with a luxe blend of Devonshire fleece wool, South American horsetail and soft Turkish cotton for optimum ventilation. A pocket sprung divan takes care of all your storage needs. This example is priced from £4,500 and includes a king size bed, the Herald Superb mattress, Prestige divan and Atlas headboard. **01752 366 311, vispring.co.uk**

EASTERN PROMISE

With gloriously rich Oriental paisley prints taken from hand-painted, mid-nineteenth century shawls, the Jubilee collection from Liberty Art Fabrics is pattern paradise. Shown here is Patricia Anne wallpaper, priced at £69 for a 10m roll, and Patricia velvet fabric, priced at £115 per m. **020 7734 1234, liberty.co.uk**



SECOND NATURE

Taking a cue from the great outdoors, the Woodland collection by Christy features soft, rich colours such as Dune and Espresso. The textural throws and cushions are great for creating a soothing haven. Prices start from £40 and the Karina throws (pictured here) are priced £120 each. ***0845 758 5252, christy-towels.com***

SILK ROUTE

With hypo-allergenic and heat regulating properties, silk is the perfect partner for a good night's sleep. Inspired by the beauty of nature at twilight, Gingerlily's Tropical Night collection is woven in Mulberry silk, famed for its lustrous sheen and fine texture. In shades of aubergine and pewter, prices start at £89. **0843 216 9902, gingerlily.co.uk**



TALKING POINT

Get the dinner party conversation started thanks to these ceramics from Anatomy Boutique. Handmade in Stoke-on-Trent and designed by anatomist and medical illustrator Emily Evans, each piece has an anatomically correct pattern of digestion, and includes teeth, stomach and liver illustrations. Prices start at £50 for a cup and saucer and £50 for a dinner plate. ***anatomyboutique.com***



DARK & HANDSOME

Add style to your home using dark and moody hues, teamed with leather furnishings. It's a tactile look for the winter months. We've fallen head over heels for this Viscount 3-seater leather sofa, £1,499 and the textured Mackenzie stool, £399. And new from Andrew Martin comes this cabin-chic Lumber Jack Beech wallpaper, £62.50 per 10m roll, all at Fishpools. **01992 636 465, fishpools.co.uk**



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LIFE'S LITTLE LUXURIES

Sheer indulgence

BOCA DO LOBO'S ultra-feminine bedside table oozes glamour...

Inspired by the traditional craft of the same name, the limited edition Crochet collection includes this bedside table, which is perfect for storing your night-time essentials. Boasting an opulent gold leaf finish on a wooden base, it is decorated with brass door handles, forged together by expert jewellers. The result is a stunning metal mesh which completely covers the surface. The handles can also be copper-plated for a warmer look. Sweet dreaming has never been so stylish.



The Crochet bedside table is priced at around £7,500, from Boca Do Lobo. **bocadolobo.com**



STYLE THROUGH THE AGES

Art Deco

In the third instalment of our series, Charlotte Barber celebrates the glamour of Art Deco and reveals why it is still flourishing today

The decade of the Roaring Twenties is best remembered for its vibrant cultural scene, booming economy and the start of consumerism. From jazz music and fashionable flappers to luxury ocean liners and breathtaking skyscrapers, there was an abundance of inspiration and excitement on every corner.

The 1925 Parisian International Exposition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts (the root of the term 'Art Deco') kick-started our love affair with the new. Streamlined shapes and bold patterns replaced the organic forms and natural motifs of the Art Nouveau period. Industrialisation brought new materials, striking colour schemes and abstract forms – all of which embraced the machine-age with vigour. Architecture and interior design combined to create a powerful impact, unlike anything seen before.

At its peak in the 1920s, Art Deco oozed luxury, glamour and exuberance. As the Great Depression of the 1930s took hold it became a form of escapism, with sunburst and sunrise motifs often appearing on entrance gates and as stained glass in front doors to lift the mood of the nation.

The glamour of the silver screen was a huge influence on the most fashionable interiors, and Hollywood defined mood lighting, cocktail cabinets, mirrors and glossy black lacquered furniture as the height of sophistication. Motifs were exciting and eye-popping – chevrons and zig-zags were incredibly popular and new materials such as Bakelite, steel and chrome were used to great effect. Modern monochrome was the quintessential colour palette of the era, with bright colours such as green and pink introduced as a contrast. Furniture embraced streamlined shapes and focal point fireplaces were often crafted in a stepped profile – the classic Art Deco look.

The discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb in 1922 saw a wave of exoticism sweep the nation, and Egyptian pyramids and sphinxes quickly found their way onto furnishings and decorative accessories. So, for a touch of faraway chic, introduce zebra print rugs, inlaid wood and palm plants to your space.

Many Art Deco houses have unfortunately been stripped of all their original features, so if your home is blessed with authentic fixtures and fittings, be sure to cherish them. But if your property doesn't boast wood block parquet flooring or an original tiled fireplace, don't be afraid to mix in reproduction items for a well co-ordinated scheme.

Lighting is a key feature in the Art Deco home - opt for elegant uplighters and slender floor lamps to channel the style. In terms of fabrics and papers, your first port of call should be the archive prints from the interior fashion houses – Harlequin, Osborne & Little and Colefax & Fowler all have key Art Deco patterns which will look authentic in a period scheme.

As well as representing luxury and glamour, Art Deco became a form of escapism during the Depression



Above Osborne medium sofa in Harlequin Concept Slate Steel fabric, £2,869; Alnwick coffee table, £599, Multiyork. **multiyork.co.uk**
Domino mosaic wall tiles, £99 per sq m; Abbey porcelain floor tiles in Woburn, £84.90 per sq m; Xaviera lights, £184 each, Fired Earth. **firedearth.com**





Clockwise from left
Black panther figurine, £13.99; Jazz Odeon mirror table lamp, £34.99, **dunelm.com;**
Chest of drawers, £399; facet wheel mirror, £150, both from the Gatsby collection of mirrored furniture at **next.co.uk;**
Starburst tableware, from £10, Biba at **houseoffraser.co.uk;**
Tessella wallpaper (W6580-01), £75 per 10m roll, **osborneandlittle.com**







GET THE LOOK
Folk tales

Bold repeat patterns and a cheerful, colourful palette will create a cosy and creative vibe in your interiors





NATURE TRAIL
Folklore navy enamel coffee pot, £17.95, Hintons Home. **01202 977 329, hintonshome.com**

PATTERN PERFECTION
Folk motif mug set, £16.99, The Oak Room. **01992 501 040, oakroomshop.co.uk**





ON RED ALERT
Dhurrie rug, £285, Mahout Lifestyle. **0845 116 6333, mahoutlifestyle.com**



SOFT TOUCH
Embroidered felt foot stool, £75, Hubsch at Jasmine Way. **020 8715 2520, jasmineway.co.uk**

VINTAGE VIBE
Pashtun chair in vintage fabric, £1,725, Barker & Stonehouse. **0333 355 9185, barkerandstonehouse.co.uk**





SWEET DREAMS
Akerkulla linen set (quilt cover and four pillowcases), £30, Ikea. **020 3645 0015, ikea.com**

Rated reads

For more ideas, pick up one of these inspirational books

British Folk Art by Martin Myrone and Jeff McMillan (£15.99, Tate Publishing)

Folk Art from the American Museum in Britain by Laura Beresford (£20, Scala Publishers Ltd)



Suzani pouffes, £65 each, Graham & Green. **020 8987 3700, grahamandgreen.co.uk**

Far left
Pluto candle holder, £46, The Scandinavian Shop. **01436 673 623, scandinavianshop.co.uk**

3 OF THE BEST.... *Repeat pattern prints*

Evoke a feeling of nostalgia in your scheme with these cheery designs



SWATCH WATCH
Picardy fabric in madder red, £81 per m, Lewis & Wood. **01453 878 517, lewisandwood.co.uk**



IF WALLS COULD TALK
Butterflies wallpaper, £40 per 10m roll, In-Spaces. **020 7268 3315, in-spaces.com**



MATERIAL WORLD
Wabi Sabi Ahoha fabric (120209), £27 per m, Scion. **0845 123 6805, scion.uk.com**

STYLE SECRETS

- For an authentic folk art feel at home, look for handmade items which showcase an array of traditional crafts. Hand-sewn, knitted, crocheted and embroidered fabrics are a must, but stencilled and hand-painted furniture will also give a nod to this nostalgic style.
- Warm wood with carved elements and cut-out detailing are perfect for a homespun look. A rich colour palette with decorative motifs, often in a repeat pattern, will give a folksy feel to any space. Introduce pattern and don't be afraid to mix and match – it will all add to the eclectic vibe.
- Remember - folk style is all about embracing memories of times gone by. Display beloved treasures and trinkets together with hand-crafted items, which should take pride of place in your scheme. Keep an eye out for vintage fabrics and soft furnishings – particularly from the 1960s – to give a truly bohemian air to your interior.

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3



4

1 100% wool chunky knit floor cushion, £159, Nordic House. 01872 223 220, **nordichouse.co.uk**
2 Wool blanket, £230, Decorator's Notebook. 0845 474 1747, **decoratorsnotebook.co.uk**
3 Heather knit porcelain storage jar, £19, Puji. 020 8886 3000, **puji.com**
4 Chunky knit mini stool, £125, Cox & Cox. 0844 858 0744, **coxandcox.co.uk**
5 Ginger double knitted pod, from £70, Next. 0844 844 8000, **next.co.uk**
6 Vinter cushion, £12, Ikea. 020 3645 0015, **ikea.com**
7 Black and white heavy knit cushion, £44, Naken Interiors. 01502 715 064, **naken.co.uk**
8 Cable knit cushion, £12, George Home. 0800 952 0101, **george.com/home**
9 Clock with removable knitted cover, £127, DesResDesign. 01386 793 240, **desresdesign.co.uk**



5



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7



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8 THINGS WE LOVE RIGHT NOW

Go green for 2015 with these on-trend olive items


3

1 Cylinder lampshade, £267.03; Plaza floor cushion, £257.18; Bella stool, £193.22, all The Velvet Lab. 01282 471 610, **thevelvetlab.com**

2 Handmade green glass decanter, £65, JasmineWay. 020 8715 2520, **jasmineway.co.uk**

3 Small utility light in royal green, £45, Dotcomgiftshop. 020 8746 2473, **dotcomgiftshop.com**

4 Green scatter cushion, £200; green thistle kilt cushion, £245, both Prickly Thistle Scotland. 07801 593 550, **pricklythistlescotland.co.uk**

5 Capri chair in olive, £299, Tesco. 0800 323 4050, **tesco.com**

6 Small green ceramic jug, £16, Berry Red. 01432 274 805, **berryred.co.uk**

7 Hawkins storage footstool in olive green, £149, Made.com. 0845 557 6888, **made.com**

8 Lampshade, from £70, Fermoie. 01672 513 723, **fermoie.com**


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Fruit Punch

If your interiors are ripe for a makeover, get inspired with these rich berry hues

Edited by **LLOYD BURGESS**



Faux silk lined curtains and tiebacks, from £31.95, House of Bath



EDITOR'S CHOICE
Newick cushion, £42, Laura Ashley



Luxaflex mirror shutters in pink, £475 per m², Luxaflex



Belle Fuschia wallpaper, £85 per roll, Sophie Conran for Arthouse



Oscar loveseat in raspberry, from £1,130, Sofa.com

PAINT PALETTE

The five collections from Paint by Conran feature stunning shades inspired by nature. **0845 094 9030, paintbyconran.com**



Viola's Bloom

Poppy Pop

Tulips Galore

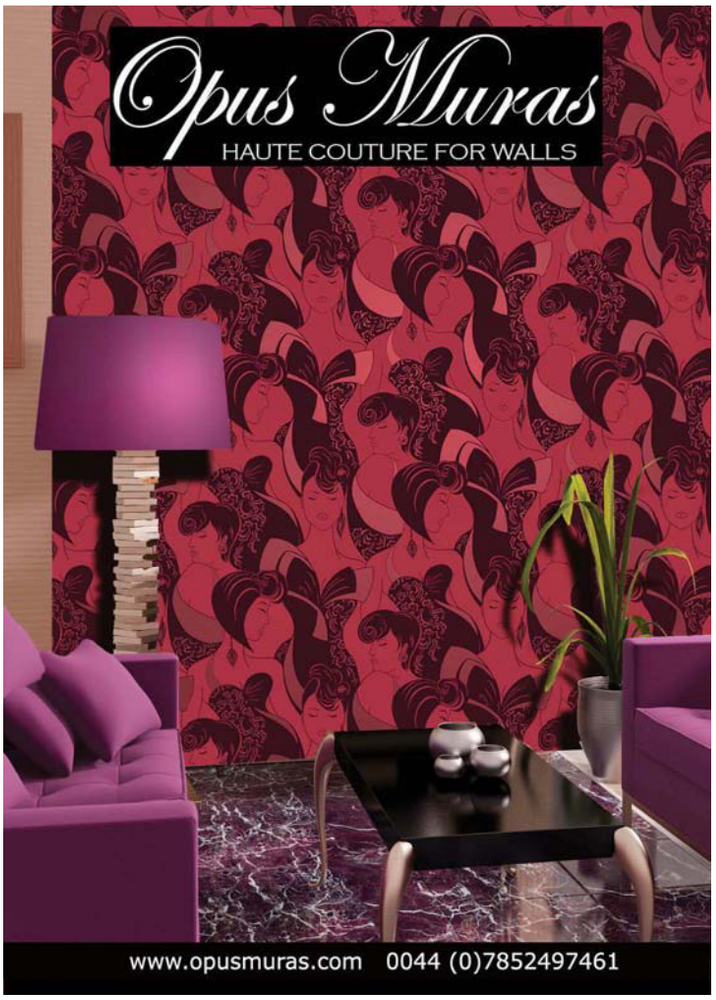
Fallen Fruits

Squashed Tomato



Julianne velvet loveseat, £399; Savoy mirror glass occasional table, £129; Butlers tray table, £35; pink chenille cushion, £10; Gatsby cushion, £10; purple fan cushion, £14; Butterfly triptych, £6; etched barrel vase, £12, all Tesco

Winter berries stand out beautifully in a frosty setting, so use this as inspiration when it comes to your décor







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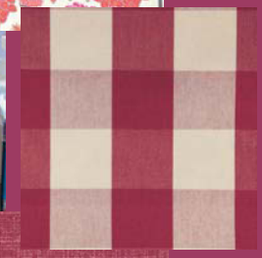
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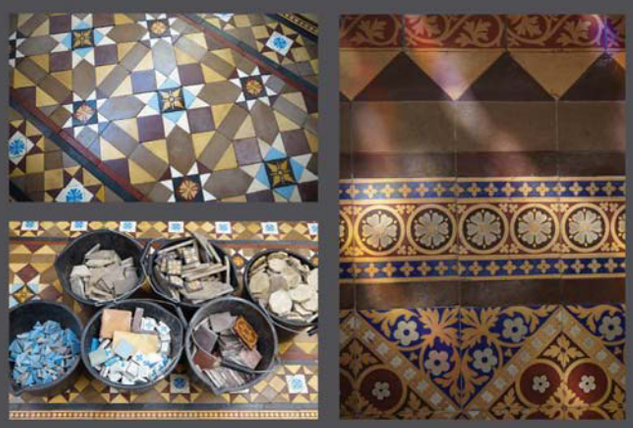
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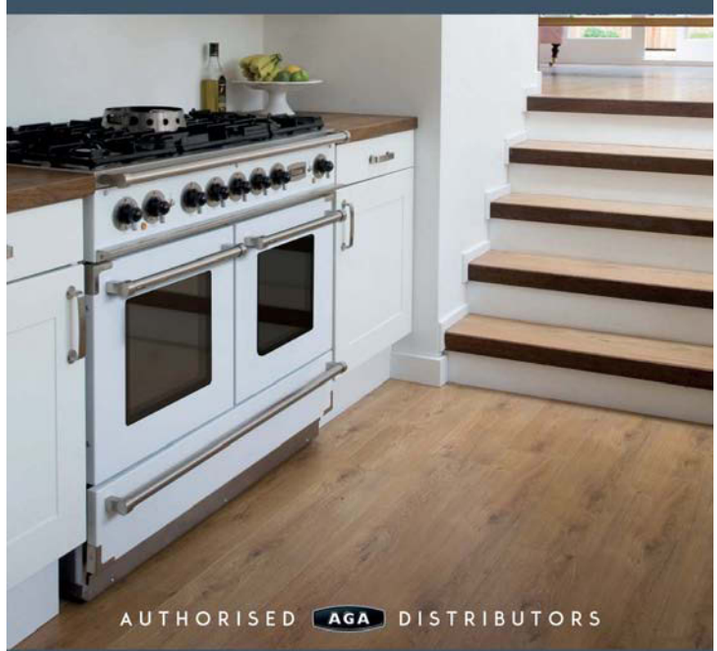
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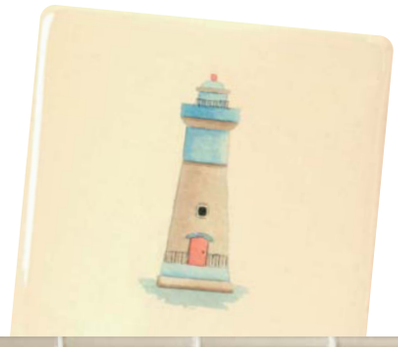


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On the tiles

Save 20% on Maggie Mumford's Can't Wait range of stylish tiles

Add an artist's touch to your home by investing in some pretty tiles for your kitchen or bathroom. These key rooms are the busiest areas in any abode, so ensure you make a statement in yours by decorating with designs which bring a smile to your face.

We've joined forces with the ceramic artist Maggie Mumford to give our lovely readers an exclusive 20% discount on Maggie's Can't Wait range of tiles. Plus, Maggie is also offering 20% off her collection of hand-finished mugs, so you can enjoy your very favourite beverage in style this winter.

IMMEDIATE STYLE

If you want to update your interiors quickly, the Can't Wait collection of ready-order tiles is ideal. The tiles boast limited edition, hand-painted illustrations, which are digitally scanned and applied to the tiles by hand, then fired for a permanent finish. Comprising of eight fabulous designs, including Dogs, Party Cakes and the new Chirpy Bird motif, each one is available as a single tile or as part of a panel with a moulded tile border. If you've got a specific idea in mind, Maggie can follow your brief in order to create something completely original, tailored to suit your tastes.

When it comes to creating the tiles, Maggie has a rigorous process which ensures top quality in each of her designs. "I start with an initial sketch for approval," she says. "This is usually to scale, to make sure that the image sits comfortably in the space available. Once the design has been approved I start painting – building the image up over five or six layers, with a firing in between each layer. This allows subtle tones and detail to be added."

Each one is manufactured on an antique Bolton Press using granular clay, which gives the tiles their superior quality.

> Maggie's unique artistic style has allowed her to create a wide range of beautiful tile designs

BEST OF BRITISH

With over twenty years of experience, Maggie's unique artistic style has allowed her to create a wide range of beautiful tile designs. Her tiles are made using the finest British materials in Stoke-on-Trent, to produce a flawless base for her to work on.

Maggie paints and fires her stunning designs in her garden studio in Surrey, drawing inspiration from the places she has been and the things around her, including her faithful companion Boris, who inspired the Dog collection.

If you're planning to revamp your kitchen, bathroom or wet room, visit **maggiemumford.com** to admire the full range of fabulous tiles available, or send her an email if you've got your own ideas in mind.

GREY SCALE

Rejuvenate your home for the new year with an understated palette of subtle grey tones



Grey cushions, from £16; silver station clock, £100; spiked silver frame, £16; map print bed set, from £25, all BHS. **0844 488 5042, bhs.co.uk**

The start of a new year is the perfect opportunity to give your interiors a lift with a fresh décor scheme. As we resolve to take better care of our bodies, or give up bad habits, we should also endeavour to devote more time and attention to our abodes. After all – happiness begins at home.

With a constant flurry of trends dictating how we should decorate, it can be a challenge to stay current. A clever way to get around this is to start with a neutral base and build upon it each season, with accessories and accent pieces. Rather than reaching for the magnolia though, load up your roller with a range of sophisticated grey hues.

Calming and refined, muted grey tints provide an ideal foundation for strong colours, such as red or blue. You can layer the look with more trend-led pieces, or stick to a sea of grey tones for the ultimate in stone cold style. If minimalism is your thing, keep it simple with sleek furniture and plain furnishings, or cosy it up with warm, natural textures and bold prints.

While we can't name fifty, there are a plethora of different shades of grey, all of which will create a distinctive ambience in your home. Artists traditionally created grey by mixing together white and black, and soon discovered that by adding a dash of red or yellow, the resulting grey would be warmer, whereas adding a hint of blue would create a cooler shade. Only use cool greys in areas that receive a lot of sunlight, otherwise your room could look stark and uninviting. Warmer greys create a comfortable, snug atmosphere, especially when coupled with lots of light – we recommend introducing more lamps, candles and other small lighting fixtures as well as your main lighting source.

The larger the room, the darker you can go. Darker shades create a grand, opulent finish, and look great in studies or living rooms. A final hint, only use flat, matt shades on your walls – glossy paints will resemble cheap metal, which isn't a good look, even if you're a fan of industrial style!

Calming and refined, grey provides an ideal foundation for strong colours





Above Arbour cushions, £28.50 each, Voyage Maison. **0141 641 1700, voyagemaison.co.uk**

Left Andrew Martin Huxley table lamp, £350; Deknudt grid mirror, £435; Eichholtz Gramercy Park side table, £770; Eichholtz Capetown horn, £110; Eichholtz Carpet Caton in grey, from £1000, all Occa-Home. **0330 363 0330, occa-home.co.uk**





Left Avalon armchair in white on grey shells fabric, from £540, sofa.com.
0333 220 4554, sofa.com

Right Elegant silver damask wallpaper, £91.84 per roll, Walls Republic.
wallsrepublic.com

Bottom Left Celestine end of bed bench, £295, Alison at Home.
020 7087 2900, alisonathome.com

Bottom Right Royal Daisy wallpaper in sage, £59 per roll, Liberty.
020 7573 9676, liberty.co.uk







Emily dining table and four cross back chairs, £1095, Furniture Village. **0800 804 8879, furniturevillage.co.uk**

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1 The Lyon bed is made of solid A grade European oak and painted in a range of pretty pastel or muted neutral colours, which contrast perfectly with the oak tops, priced from £1,180 at Snug Interiors. **01730 887 506, snug-interiors.com**

Sleeping ***beauty***

Follow our tips to ensure you have a gorgeous retreat all year round

Once upon a time the bedroom was a lavish haven where our ancestors would receive their guests and showcase their wealth. The richest houses boasted large elaborate beds, with ornamented canopies, richly-embroidered hangings, and soft feather beds under fine linen sheets. The Great Bed of Ware, now in the Victoria & Albert Museum, is a perfect example of such flair. The flamboyantly carved structure is renowned for its staggering 11 ft width, that's enough to comfortably host up to four couples!

Thankfully now you can have a room all to yourself, or to share with your partner, but how do you ensure a space that won't date? A classic look, when done well, should feel as relevant in your home today as it would have 100 years ago. Whether you aspire to Georgian lines, French glamour or prefer the sleek finishings of a luxury hideaway, taking inspiration from a specific era, region or venue will help unify your efforts to shape a room you'll enjoy for years to come.

HERITAGE CHARM

From the classical lines of Regency England to the ornamentation of High Victorian style, our history is a rich source of inspiration. You can combine elements from different periods to create a timeless, quintessentially British look. Consider the age of your property and imagine what the original bedrooms may have been like in the days before central heating, and count your blessings.

Remember that on average people were smaller than us in the past, so if you are buying an antique bed make sure that you and your other half can rest comfortably. If you're on a budget, there are many bargains to be had at auction, including brown furniture – which is making a comeback. The key to success is turning up prepared.

If you're new to the scene, seek advice from a specialist, or get the best of both worlds by choosing period-style options from a modern manufacturer.

PERFECT FIT

Elegant and romantic, the French boudoir boasts antique furnishings, floral fabrics, rustic details and gilded accents. Rich colours adorned the houses of old, but muted hues will assist in creating a modern rendition of Gallic charm. This look is based on teaming the antique with the modern, so think about updating your bedroom furniture to include



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2 Elegant and oozing comfort, the Neston bed, priced from £900, is a great way to bring hotel chic to your boudoir. Expect to pay from £900 at Willow & Hall. **0845 527 9674, willowandhall.co.uk**

3 Treat your bedroom to some Gothic glamour with this stunning dressing table, made of solid mahogany and sourced from sustainable plantations. It is priced £424 at Lock Stock and Barrel, **01531 633 333, lockstockandbarrel-uk.com**

4 Treat your bedroom to a lovingly restored antique bed from the specialists at Seventh Heaven, based on the North Wales and Shropshire border. **01691 777 622, divinedreams.co.uk**

5 Curl up in style in the classic Lysette bed, priced from £4,850 at And So To Bed. **0808 144 4343 andsotobed.co.uk**









a mix of classic and vintage-style pieces that complement one another without being overly coordinated. Relaxed, stylish living is the plan!

Keep an eye out for ornate chandeliers, striking armoires with beautiful carved detail and silk chaise longues complete with cabriole legs. Ensure you pay attention to scale; purchasing too many oversized pieces of furniture which overcrowd the space is a common mistake. Instead, go for pieces that work with the proportions of your room. Take a tape measure to showrooms if you're unsure and always double check dimensions to ensure the perfect fit.

HOTEL CHIC

Step into a boutique hotel and the first thing you notice is the care taken to set the mood. Your bed should elicit the same response. If luxury and comfort are at the top of your list, then an upholstered headboard may well be the answer. Be careful when choosing a fabric as oils from hair and skin can quickly stain, so do your research before you commit.

Enhance the feeling of being in your own special retreat by investing in a comfortable, supportive mattress, high thread count linens and plump pillows to ensure sweet dreams.

The last step is to eliminate clutter with great storage, and culling possessions which don't make you happy or serve a purpose. If you love reading in bed, treat yourself to a decent bookcase or bedside table, and don't forget appropriate lighting. Your room may not be on show, but it needs to be a peaceful and comforting sanctuary for you.

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1 Madelaine lavender organic oven gloves, £15, Ochre & Ocre. **0845 331 1277, ochreandocre.com** **2** Bloomsbury cereal bowls, £8 each, Debenhams. **0844 800 8877, debenhams.com** **3** Copper measuring cups, £50, Dunnes Stores. **0844 264 3185, dunnesstores.com** **4** Ceramic pot in cool grey, £26, House Envy. **01446 795 594, house-envy.co.uk** **5** Marble top kitchen trolley, £1,215, Sweetpea & Willow. **0845 257 2627, sweetpeaandwillow.com** **6** Wall mounted plate rack, £95, Alison at Home. **020 7087 2900, alisonathome.com**

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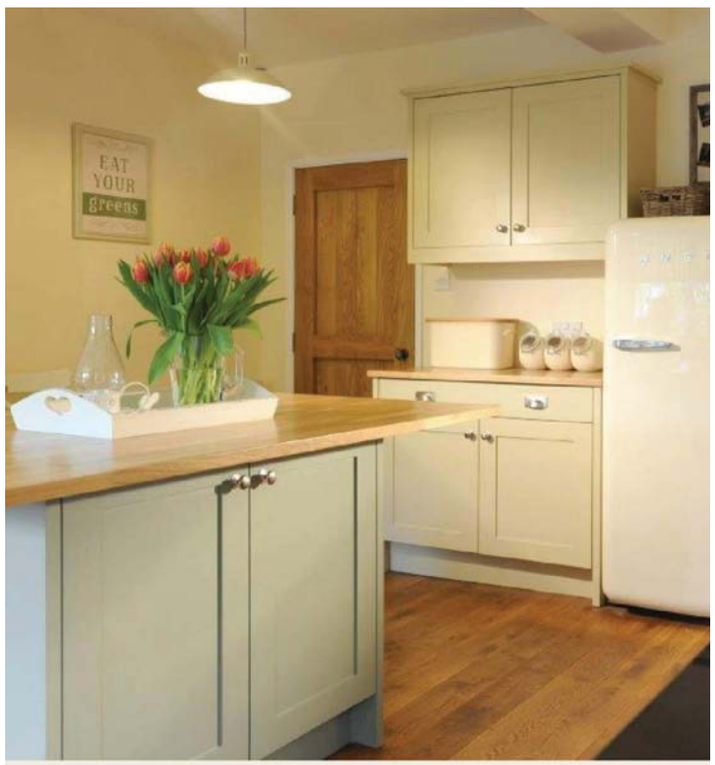
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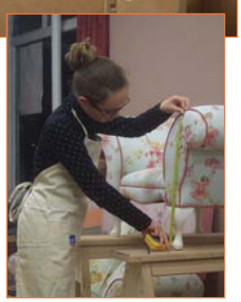
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Large sofa, £2,298, DFS.
0800 110 5000, dfs.co.uk

SEATING PLAN

Make your home a cosy and sociable haven with multiple sofa spaces

With the January sales starting earlier each year, it can be hard to resist investing in a new sofa. But what if your current one doesn't need replacing? If yours is comfy, stylish and in good condition, then now is the time to think outside the box, and see if some of your other rooms could benefit from a new seating centrepiece.

CHANGING ROOMS

The first thing you could do is create a second living space, for instance, a drawing room, TV room, or even just a small cubbyhole. In today's modern world there's such a vast array of home entertainment systems, it can be a refreshing change to have somewhere to get away on your own. Need a spot in which to curl up with a book? Do the kids want to watch something on their own? Having an extra area in which to do this can benefit your whole family, and make the most of overlooked spaces.

When it comes to the sofa overwhelming the room, you don't have to worry about this as much as you would in a lounge. Here, you want it to look cosy, so you can fit in one big sofa with space for the whole family to squeeze on and watch a film together, or opt for a few smaller ones in complementary colours. Don't forget to pile on throws and cushions for extra comfort, and invest in some footstools too, or look for sofas with built-in footrests. You'll soon have somewhere that family and friends will love to spend time.



Nathan Scandi sofa, £1,118, Furniture Village.
0800 804 8879, furniturevillage.co.uk

SITTING PRETTY

Somewhere else you may not have considered situating a sofa is your hallway. This obviously depends on space – you don't want to block up a narrow entranceway with seating you'll rarely use. But if that's not an issue, consider a lighter framed design – Scandinavian or French-style seating can be ideal.

You want a sofa here to look beautiful, as your hallway is, of course, the first impression visitors will have of your home. It's also unlikely that a sofa here will be used for hours on end, so going for style over comfort is more than acceptable. A sofa in the hall can be handy if your telephone is out here, for anyone who still enjoys a traditional corded telephone that is! But even if you're using your mobile or a cordless



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phone, it's nice to have somewhere to sit and chat to friends where you won't have to compete with the sound of the television, washing machine or another family member's conversation.

OVER THE TOP

If you have a big enough landing, this can also be the perfect place to put a sofa. Often this space can go underused, serving only to link the upstairs rooms. Making this a social area or a getaway point can transform your home. It's out of the way enough to provide a quiet spot for reading and relaxing, but it means that you're not hidden away in a bedroom or study. You don't need anything huge or grand here, just something snug and cosy to sit or lie on. Add a small coffee table adorned with magazines and books and you'll find yourself gravitating towards this space more and more.

A dainty sofa in the bedroom can be the start of a stylish dressing area. Much like the hallway, you only need something petite in here, as the bed should always be the focal point. But an ornate French design, whether in a gilt finish, natural wood or painted, will be perfect. Add a dressing table and a grand mirror, perhaps even a room divider if you can fit one in, and you'll find yourself taking more time choosing the right outfit in the morning. In the guest bedrooms, opting for a sofa bed will maximise on both space and practicality. You'll get much more joy out of a multifunctional room than one that's filled with a largely unused bed.



Three-seater sofa, £1,198, DFS. **0800 110 5000, dfs.co.uk**



Chester large two-seat buttoned sofa in red chenille, £POA, Artistic Upholstery. **0115 973 4481, artisticupholstery.co.uk**

Mary-Jane gold French settee, £1,179, Out There Interiors. **020 8099 7443, outthereinteriors.com**



Pompidou sofa with removable cover, £1,180, Loaf. **0845 468 0698, loaf.com**

OUTDOOR LIVING

Thinking ahead, there is an array of great conservatory furniture that will allow you to create a place to entertain guests in warmer months. Bamboo or wicker designs are perfect, as the durable material will withstand exposure to the elements. Look for natural colours and patterns in your choice of materials to reflect the shapes and prints of your outdoor space.

So, when you see a sofa you like in the January sales, don't think that you have to pass it up just because it doesn't suit your living room. Have a ponder about where else it could go in order to make the most of space and transform how you use your home.

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We're looking to invest in a traditional roll-top bath. Do you have any advice?

Going from a modern bathroom to a more traditional design is possible, but it requires a change in mindset. In newer bathrooms the tub is often in the corner, but a free-standing design looks best as a centrepiece. It doesn't have to be right in the middle if you don't have the space, but it should be at least 30cm from a wall to be shown off properly. You also need to consider the water supply pipes, as they will be exposed. If this is a concern, you can buy covers in a complementary chrome finish.

Simon Stowell, Bathroom Discount Centre

020 7385 2330, bathdisc.co.uk

Washed away

Our current shower is rather old and basic. Will a newer model be more efficient?

Of course. In today's increasingly eco-friendly world there are many advancements in technology that can make our homes greener without affecting period style. Look at specialist companies like Ecocamel, which create water-efficient power showers. Its designs force air into the water stream through a small hole at the base of the shower handle. When the water and air mix, it spins around at high speed causing turbulence which increases the pressure inside the shower head. This forces the water out of the head with all the power of a conventional shower, but using considerably less water. So it's great for the environment and will save on your water bill.

Lloyd Burgess, Period Ideas

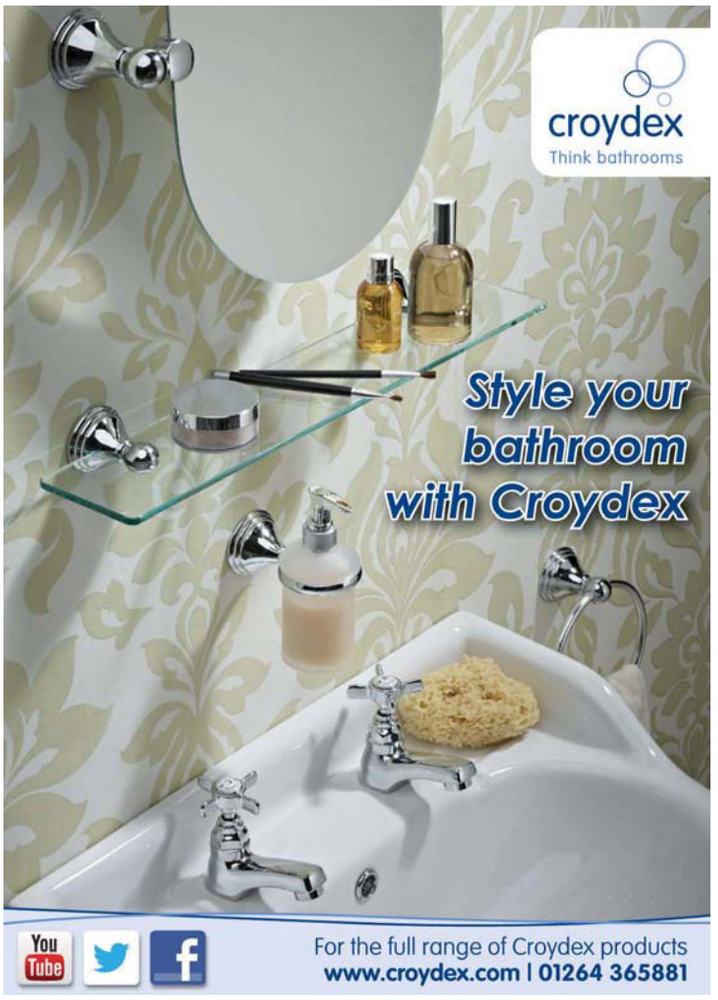
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On a roll

I'm on the hunt for some toilet roll holders to match my new bathroom scheme. Is it possible to buy them in a period style?

It's possible to purchase a whole range of high-quality bathroom accessories in a variety of traditional styles. When it comes to toilet roll holders, you can get designs that are fairly simple, or go more extravagant with ornate styles. Both looks are available in brass, aged brass or aged silver, so they'll provide the perfect period touch to your décor. You can then add to the look with complementary towel rails, tooth brush holders, soap dishes and more.

Suzy Dymock, Period Features

01538 372 202, periodfeatures.co.uk

Square deal

We want to tile our bathroom for the first time. What are the basics we should know when choosing floor and wall tiles?

Tiles offer a long-lasting wall and floor covering that is robust and easy to maintain. Glazed ceramic, glass and porcelain tiles are waterproof, come in a huge variety of colours and shapes and can be used with underfloor heating. If you are planning to tile your shower base or fit a wet room, look for floor tiles that have both smooth and non-slip finishes. For best results, look for tile ranges that have detailing pieces to ensure all your edges and corners have a perfect finish.

Nigel Brimacombe, Reed Harris

0843 289 6059, reedharris.co.uk





Clear thinking

We're looking to build a bespoke shower enclosure, is it possible to get glass doors and panels made to fit the space perfectly?

Glass shower panels not only look stylish, they won't visually impose on your bathroom's space – ensuring a light, open aesthetic. Try Hicks & Hicks for glamorous designs such as this central door and four panels, priced at £3,130. Its screens are made from 10mm safety glass in a choice of Easy Clean finishes and a wide selection of handles. You can even have a frameless design made bespoke, so it's tailored to your exact requirements, even if your ceiling is sloped or your wall is at an angle.

Lloyd Burgess, Period Ideas

01872 530 761, hicksandhicks.com



Touch wood

We're searching for some traditionally built bathroom furniture with a contemporary feel. What would you suggest?

Solid teak or oak furniture is an ideal solution, whether you want a natural or colour-washed finish. You can also choose between wall-mounted or free-standing basins and storage units. Wall-mounted will create a more modern, sleek feel, while free-standing will give you the option of moving the storage units around if necessary. Solid wood is also extremely practical as it's far more durable than a veneered or laminated finish.

Hazel Lancashire, Finwood Designs

01926 484 037, finwooddesigns.co.uk

Splash out

We want to add a shower to our bathtub. Other than the plumbing, is this something that we can do ourselves?

Adding a shower to your bathroom is a great investment and can save money on your energy bills too. Shower rails are easy to install yourself if you're happy with a spot of DIY. For extra showering space, choose a curved rod, which will also help prevent the shower curtain clinging. Or, if you dread the thought of drilling holes, a self-supporting rail is an easy-to-fit option. Shower curtains are available in a range of designs, so you can really bring your bathroom to life.

Kelly-Anne Crean, Croydex

01264 365 881, croydex.com





Looking up

The floorspace in our bathroom is rather limited, but the ceiling is quite high. How can we maximise storage room?

A bathroom with minimal floorspace is fairly common, but thankfully, many bathroom product manufacturers have space-saving solutions to address this and give the illusion of more room. Combine this with tall storage units and short-projection pieces and you can create a stylish and functional bathroom without compromising on design. If you have enough wall space, try fitting a storage column to match the vanity unit for a coordinated designer look.

Breda Kelliher, Bath & Shower

0330 134 7063, bathandshower.com



MAKE IT *Personal*

Laura Atri visits innovative designers Jali and discovers the joy of custom-made furniture

Whether it's colour coordinating each room in your home, or ensuring all the door handles and light switches match perfectly, I believe that attention to detail really takes a house from being standard to sublime. This is where Jali comes in. The company, which is based in the beautiful countryside just outside Canterbury, is a high-tech manufacturer of made-to-measure and custom-made furniture, from cupboards and bookcases, to wardrobes, shelving and dressers.

Jali manufactures a wide range of fitted furniture and architectural products for both private and business customers. Operating from a purpose-built 24,000 sq ft factory, it uses a revolutionary design and manufacturing system. "We aim to bridge the gap between a bespoke joinery company and a dedicated, highly-skilled carpenter," explains Nicholas Showan, the creator of Jali.

TAILOR-MADE

But what makes Jali different from other companies on the market? Firstly, it ensures each customer is in the driving seat from the very beginning of the process. You can customise every detail of your order at jali.co.uk, using the Jali Designer. This fantastic tool is simple, free and user-friendly, and shoppers are able to see the price update in real time as measurements are added for width, height and depth. This unusual and helpful shopping experience has ensured the company has grown from strength to strength for nearly 25 years. "Jali furniture is affordable and provides good quality bespoke joinery without the high cost and inconvenience it normally entails," says Nicholas. "We make everything to order in Britain and pass the savings directly on to our customers. Plus we deliver in around two weeks, which is free to most of the UK."

With interiors fashions changing every season, it can be hard to decide on furniture for a period home that will look classic and fresh, and give your décor longevity. This is exactly why homeowners turn to Jali. "Our service

Giving our customers exactly what they want and need is exciting and rewarding, and our drive to improve never ends









JALI
creates beautifully bespoke furniture, made to your exact desire and specifications. Call **01227 833 333** or visit **jali.co.uk** for more information.

opens up a whole new way of designing," Nicholas explains. "You can choose from different patterns to customise radiator cabinet grilles, door panels, screens and decorative shutters – a definite wonderland for all aspiring designers and for those who take pride in getting the finishing touches just right."

The online Jali Designer tool also allows you to easily vary the style of elements such as uprights, skirting and tops, as well as the position and number of shelves, doors and drawers for your bespoke storage solutions. The furniture is available primed, top-coated or in real wood veneers, and you can see what your pieces will look like before payment. Once you are happy with your design, it is sent directly to the factory. The furniture is usually delivered in kit form, with pieces that are easy to assemble (larger pieces can be part-assembled if required) as it uses a simple cam-and-bolt system, so all you need is a screwdriver.

HELPING HAND

Each of Jali's products are designed to last a lifetime, and can be repainted to match new colour schemes. And when it comes to refurbishment, worry not, as parts can be remade to adapt to changing needs and situations.

Nicholas is rightly proud of the level of customer care his company offers. "Giving our clients exactly what they want and need is exciting and rewarding, and our drive to improve Jali's products and services never ends," he says. "Jali takes a lot of care with its service - all calls are answered by members of the team who want our buyers to be delighted with everything they have designed. If you can't create exactly what you need on the website, our friendly and experienced staff will help solve the problem."

A revolution in the way we shop and design for our homes, Jali is set to build on its success in the years to come. The business will continue to supply property owners and interior designers with stunning custom furniture which will make a style statement in any space, and provide practical storage solutions. So, if you are in the market for beautiful bespoke joinery minus the cost and inconvenience, look no further than Jali – it's the future of furniture!

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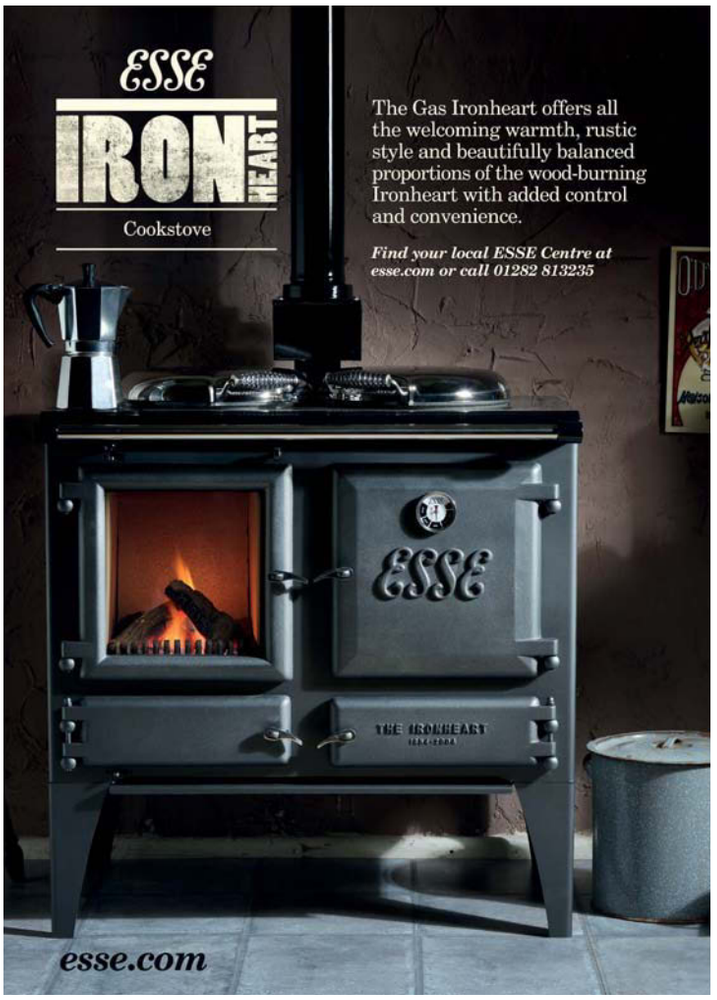
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2 VINTAGE CHIC

There's nothing like a good old-fashioned table to bring family and friends together. This sturdy beauty in antique pine has a waxed finish and two deep drawers from the Kernow Furniture Warehouse. ***07590 626 419 kernowfurniturewarehouse.co.uk***





3 SHAKER IT UP

Make the most of every inch of your kitchen with a fitted Shaker kitchen. A dark floor and black granite is the perfect foil for this handmade painted cabinetry by Pineland, price on request. **01229 271 143, pineland.co.uk**

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4 | TRUE BLUE

Bespoke kitchens are a great solution in a period house, helping you to work with glorious architectural details or quirks such as uneven floors. This example was made by Steven James kitchens, price on request, **01789 508 085, stevenjameskitchens.co.uk**



5 | ALL WHITE NOW

Choosing custom made cabinetry ensures that every inch of the room can be used to its best advantage. This impressive kitchen by Bentons is elegant and timeless. **01278 789 849, bentonfurniture.com**





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7 | FAMILY FAVOURITE

A classic contemporary kitchen is one of the nicest ways to add value to your home. The Henley kitchen starts from £10,000. **0370 777 0099, kitstone.co.uk**



8 | CHEF'S DELIGHT

Bring classic country style to your home with an Artisan kitchen, designed for those who love to cook. It is priced from £25,000 at John Lewis of Hungerford. **0700 278 4726, john-lewis.co.uk**



9 | WOODEN WONDER

This shapely design is made from a distinctive solid oak frame with a veneered oak centre panel in a light oak finish. It is priced from around £9,200 at Caple. **0117 938 1900, caple.co.uk**

10 | PICTURE PERFECT

Make your kitchen feel special with some charming pieces by Marlborough Tiles. These handpainted sporting scenes tiles show a range of country pursuits and are priced from £28.50 per tile. **01672 512 422, marlboroughtiles.com**





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EVERYTHING'S COVERED

We help you to put your best foot forward with flooring in the hub of your home

Interior design is a world with a language of its own, so let's get away from calling ceilings the fifth wall and concentrate on something more down-to-earth.

Kitchen flooring may not sound glamorous but it will always be there for you – and every piece of dropped toast, before the dog gets it. If you're planning on overhauling your kitchen this year do remember that flooring plays a big part in the overall look, and you'll be living with it for a long time.

There's a superb range of materials available, whatever life stage you're at, and remember that colours inspired by nature are a good choice for such a hard-working room and should work with most other shades, should you wish to redecorate.

A key consideration is whether you want to have a kitchen to entertain in with sleek fixtures and fittings or a welcoming space where everyone wanders in from the garden with muddy boots on and the dogs snuggle by the Aga.

Underfloor heating can take the chill off stone tiles or work beautifully with engineered wood flooring, so if you're tempted to go for this option, make sure you know exactly which materials your preferred heating system will be compatible with.

TONE ON TONE

It is also worth working out if you like the idea of a contrast in your kitchen with granite worktops, white cabinets and a matching dark floor, or whether more complementary tones



VINTAGE VINYL
Azulejos vinyl flooring, £19.99 per sq m, at Zazous. **0845 591 3440, zazous.co.uk**

appeal. Slate is a great choice for a farmhouse kitchen and improves with age. It has a naturally riven surface and this texture means there will be fewer slip or trip hazards.

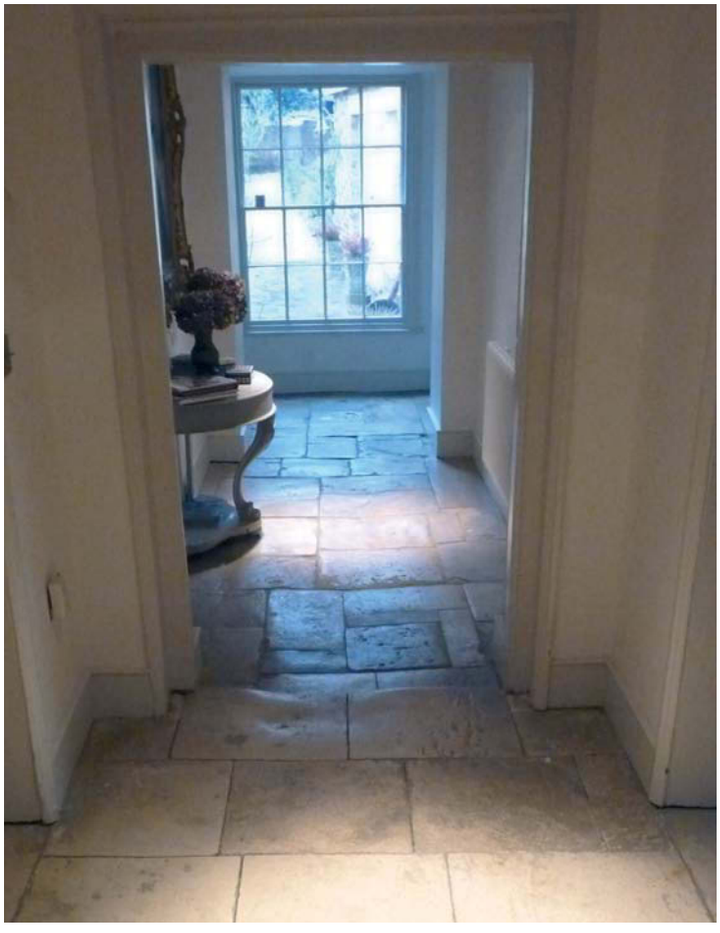
Other natural stones such as limestone can draw admiring glances, and the fact that they have such beautiful natural variation means that no one else will have a floor quite like yours. Ceramic tiles are a good-looking option, whether you wish to mimic the appearance of a natural material or you would relish the idea of creating patterns on the floor.

Remember that the finished result doesn't have to look like a gleaming 1980s' chequer board. Subtle and more ornate shapes are available for you to create a distinctive look. Colour plays an important part, so take your time when browsing in the show room and take samples of worktops and cabinetry along with you so the sales advisors can suggest suitable porcelain and terracotta tiles which will work with them.

You do need to be aware of exactly what you are taking on in terms of fitting costs, sealing and maintenance so ask plenty of questions in the showroom. The only silly



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Simply Oak £39.99 per sq m, at Kersaint Cobb.
01675 430 430, kersaintcobb.co.uk



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"This gorgeous 18th century limestone flooring is perfect for kitchens and hallways," says Ron Jones, the owner of flooring specialists Ronson Reclaim. "We also sell a range of more recent reclaimed limestone that is highly affordable and durable, as well as quarry tiles and oak flooring." For more details visit **ronsonreclaim.com** or call **01452 387 890**

question is the one that you don't ask. Technology in flooring is always developing, so listen carefully to find out everything you need to know about product care and don't cut corners. Just because something works well on your neighbour's floor doesn't mean it will do the right job for you.

CHARACTER PIECE

Never be afraid to think out of the box with flooring in an older property. It can be another great way of adding personality to your home, bringing more texture and excitement. "Some people think that parquet can't be used in the kitchen," says Sara Cox, of Parquet, Parquet, (01507 313 470, parquet-parquet.co.uk).

"But this is simply not true. We just need to remember that parquet should have the right finish applied and be given regular TLC. I recommend that you always buy from a professional supplier because you can ensure that what you receive will be properly identified and from one source. Don't skimp on the quantity because there is always wastage in the pattern. It is really a good idea to have some spare in case future repairs may be necessary, or a cupboard or hearth is removed and you need to fill the area. This often happens so it pays to be prepared. Finally, always ask for a sample so that you know exactly what you are getting. It is really important to know what to expect from your reclaimed wood."

If you're thinking of a softer option then Tracey Hayden of Hayden Carpets (01424 431 809, haydencarpets.org.uk) is here to help. She says, "There are plenty of options for flooring in the kitchen. Vinyl and vinyl planking is very popular today. The quality of vinyl flooring has improved considerably in the past 10 years and surfaces are much more hardwearing than they were previously. I always advise my customers to look at the wear warranty – which can range from 10-15 years – before making their final decision. Speaking to a specialist is really important to ensure that you get the best advice on flooring which will suit your kitchen, your lifestyle and your family's needs."

EXPERT ADVICE
CLEAN SWEEP

Once you have found the right flooring for you, do make sure you take good care of it. *Period Ideas* recommends Lithofin MN Wash & Clean for natural stone surfaces. It is an ideal day to day floor product with a pleasant scent and excellent cleaning properties. If you are looking for a versatile cleaner which can be used on a variety of floor surfaces, try Lithofin Easy Care. Porcelain floors will benefit from Lithofin's KF Conditioning Cleaner which is specifically designed to leave a streak-free finish. Visit **lithofin-uk.co.uk** for more details.



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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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Country classics

Can you give me some tips to create a classic English kitchen?

Absolutely. The key to a timeless kitchen lies in simplicity, clean lines, ample storage and harmonious proportions. It is also wise to consider your storage requirements and have furniture made to measure, especially if you live in a period house with interesting architectural details. You need to think about the room in terms of beauty and function. Using natural materials such as timber and stone will help to create a classic feel. We are happy to supply a complete kitchen or a single piece of bespoke furniture. Drawing on over 20 years of working with antique furniture and our extensive knowledge of early 18th and 19th century furniture design, our pieces are particularly suited to period properties.

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Hayley Fletcher, Brass & Traditional Sinks
01384 220 030, sinks.co.uk

Hot stuff

I am looking for a new kitchen stove. What do you suggest?

Why not try a wood-burning stove for rustic appeal? Esse has been making wood-burning stoves in the true sense of the word for 160 years and the Esse Plus 1 is the latest in a very long line of products. This appliance, priced from £2,668, is as tall as a typical cooker, but narrower than most wood-burning stoves. It has an excellent firebox within, so when the wood burns it maximises the energy efficiency of the fuel and minimises emissions. The stove can also be fitted with a back boiler to heat water. There is an outer fire door which, when closed, allows the cook to stand close to the cooker, or when opened, reveals the glass inner door and heat can radiate directly into the room.

Alix Eltringham, Esse
01282 813 235, esse.com





Fit for purpose

Can I really afford to have a bespoke kitchen?

Yes, you can. Bespoke doesn't need to be expensive, and tailor made cabinetry can add much more value to your house than a standard kitchen, especially if it is painted, as the colours and handles can be changed easily to reflect the tastes of new owners with little cost. We work with environmentally friendly MDF made from wood fibres and resin, bonded under high pressure. The finished boards don't have a grain and are therefore ideal for painting or filling. Once MDF is sealed, it is a very stable material, and unlike wood, it is not prone to warping or shrinkage.

Sherry Wales, James Mayor
0121 328 1643, jamesmayor.co.uk

Terrific table

I am buying a new kitchen table and need some good advice, can you help?

Comfort and practical usage is at the heart of good furniture design. Our Quaker Table provides just that, with centre column style supports, allowing seating along the whole length of the edge of the table without a leg getting in the way, and unrestricted thigh room under the table top – perfect for growing families and strapping rugby players! Our tables are designed and made to be used and to withstand a fair amount of wear. We finish our surfaces by hand planing the timbers, which helps to accentuate the grain of the carefully selected English character and burr oak timbers we work with. At only 78" long, our table can seat up to 8 people in comfort. For high days and holidays we can add an extension leaf of 21" (a place setting) to either or both ends. We make tables to order, to any size, so that you can have a table to suit exactly the proportions of your room and the number of people you need to seat.

Chris Bayliss, The Real Wood Furniture Company
01993 813 887, rwfco.com







Open-plan glam

Can you recommend a range of furniture suitable for my kitchen and living area?

At Mereway, we understand that people are keen to embrace the 'living environment' approach to kitchen design and our stockists will be proud to show your our English Revival Modern Classic collection. It is designed and built in Britain by craftsmen with traditional skills, to offer you a contemporary take on classic design. Earth tones, greens, greys and blues are the core colour choices. Contemporary mantles, feature bookshelves, wine stores and glazed display cabinets are just a few of the stylish pieces available. Individual pieces are priced from £8,000 and complete kitchens cost from £25,000–£60,000.

Graham Jones, Mereway Kitchens
0800 028 4466, merewaykitchens.co.uk



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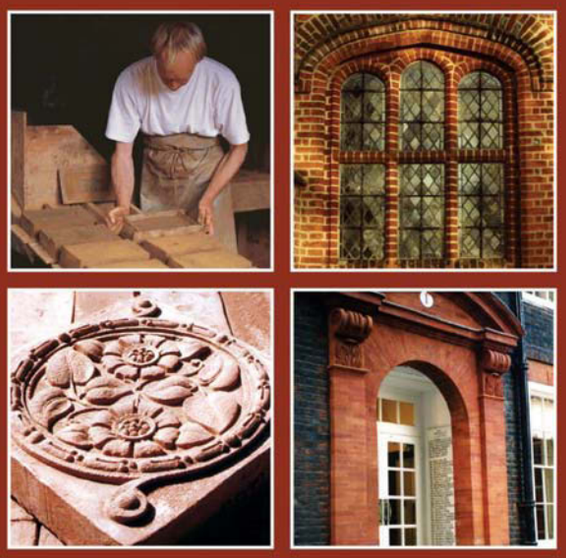
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COMPLETE GUIDE TO

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In a fix

A recent study has revealed that more than 18 million British homes are described as a 'work in progress', with a long to-do list of small jobs overwhelming homeowners. Squeaky floorboards, pictures to hang and marked walls were among the most common problems. To help solve some of these issues, Black & Decker has launched its own Project Kits, which include all the tools needed to complete small tasks. They are available from Homebase for a limited time. Find out more at **blackanddecker.co.uk**

STEP OUT

Steps and pathways can become treacherous in wet weather, but with Rust-Oleum's Anti-Slip paint, you can take the risk out of your daily stroll down the garden. This quick-drying spray paint creates a clear, aggregated finish which forms a grip on even the most polished surfaces, making it perfect for use on paths, front steps, decking, tiles and much more. Simply spray it on and leave to dry. **0191 410 6611, rustoleumspraypaint.com**

Stand strong ▸

For a huge variety of reclaimed building materials, pay a visit to Burgess Reclamation in Oxfordshire. Whether you're looking to revamp your house or garden, you'll find everything from stone and brick to roofing supplies and ornate iron benches. The company now also stocks timber and stone flooring materials imported from around the globe, to help you create a style statement underfoot. Call **01869 346 347** or go to **burgessreclamation.co.uk** to find out more.



Wooden it be nice?

Without careful planning from the outset, building regulations can be the cause of major headaches during the later stages of a renovation project. Working with an experienced designer can make the whole process run much more smoothly, and help you to steer clear of potential hurdles. Bespoke oak-frame designers and builders, Welsh Oak Frame, can use its expert knowledge to ensure a quick and easy build, from the initial concept drawings through to the finished project. **01686 688 000, welshoakframe.com**

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Revive your dining table with bold new chair cushions

Give your dining chairs a stylish makeover in your favourite fabrics. We've opted for a bright and bold punch of red with the Serafina Rosso fabric from Clarke & Clarke, but choose whatever one best complements your interiors.

All you need are some old seat covers, a wodge of gorgeous fabric, buttons and, of course, your trusty sewing machine. This really is a piece of cake for novices looking for their next challenge, and it's an easy way to give your dining room a quick makeover.



OUR MAKER...
AMANDA WALKER

DIY seat covers

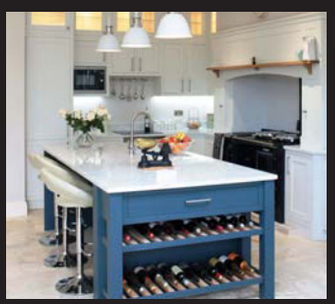
YOU'LL NEED:

- Clarke & Clarke fabric: Serafina Rosso
- Zip and zip sliders
- Pattern paper
- Buttons
- Ruler and pencil
- Rouleau loop turner
- Sewing machine
- Zipper foot
- Thread

1 Make a template in pattern paper to fit the cushion pad. Centre the pad over the pattern paper, press down on the edges and draw around the circumference. Fold the paper through the centre and firm up, then make the pencil lines more accurate on just one side. Add a 1cm seam allowance to this line and cut out. As the template is cut out through the two layers of the folded piece of paper, the curves will be exactly mirrored on the opposite side. Mark on the template the back and front of the pad. Lay the template onto the seat of the chair and mark the position of the two outer back spindles. Position and pin the template onto a double piece of fabric, with the right sides of the fabric facing each other, then cut out.

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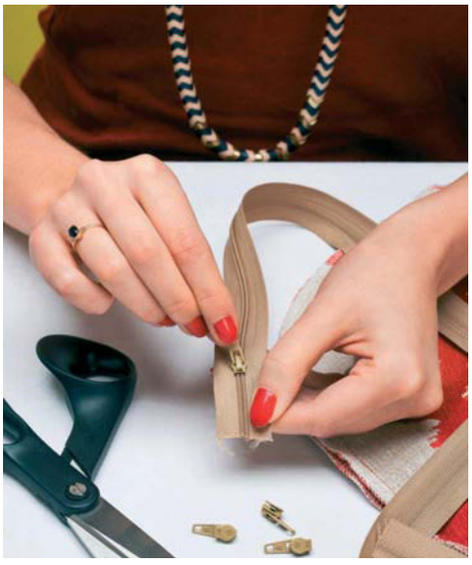
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2 Neaten the edges of the fabric pieces by overlocking or zigzagging. Match the two pieces together with the right sides of the fabric facing. Place a pin on the two spindle positions, then around the front curve of the cover. Stitch, with a 1cm seam allowance, from the first pin, around the front curve to the second spindle pin – this will leave a gap in the back.

3 Cut a length of zip to the same length as the gap in the back of the cover, plus an extra 5cm. Pull open 3cm of the zip, then pull on the zip slider. This can be a bit fiddly, but with practice it is an easy process. To stop the slider from coming off, stitch across the plastic teeth at both ends.

4 Stitch the prepared zip into the opening using a zipper foot. With the right side of the fabric facing (the cover should not be turned through at this point) place the opened zip face down, matching the end with the zip slider to one end of the opening. Position the slider 3cm away from the end of the stitching, back into the cover – this will enable the zip to be stitched in place without the slider interfering with the stitching line. Pin one side of the zip in place, then stitch along the edge of the zip's teeth. Pin the remaining side and stitch in place. Carefully thread the zip slider through to the right side, and turn the cover to the right side and press.

5 Measure from the outer spindle to the centre of the back of the chair. Add 2cm to this. Cut two lengths of fabric to this measurement, 7cm wide. Fold the strips in half lengthways, then stitch across one end and down the edge with a 5mm seam allowance. Turn the strip to the right side. This process is made easy with the aid of a rouleau loop turner. Tease out the corners and press. Make a buttonhole at the end of one of the straps.

6 Position the raw end of one of the straps 1cm away from the end of the zip – it should be laying away from the zip. Sew the strap to the cover with a 5mm seam allowance. Fold the strap back over towards the zip, then stitch again – the raw end will be sandwiched inside the second line of stitching. Repeat the process with the remaining strap at the opposite end of the zip. Finally, stitch a button to the end of the other strap. Place the cushion pad inside the cover, zip closed, then wrap the straps around the chair back and button to secure.

Love the gold effect on the table and chair legs? We used gold metallic spray paint to get the look

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01297 35700, arada.uk.com



This San Francisco fireplace in honed limestone is also available in polished Bianco Persiano and Crème Classico marbles and comes in two shelving widths (48" and 54"). Prices start from £1,390 from Montpellier Marble.
01452 714 800, montpellier.co.uk



Make sure your fireplace is in keeping with your property with the help of the experts at Thistle & Rose. The 'Eagle Victrix', pictured above, became popular as a fireplace pattern after Horace Walpole acquired his 'mighty fowl' for his villa, Strawberry Hill. The marble original had come from excavations of the baths of Caracalla in Rome.
01450 376 928, thistleandrose.co.uk



Nu-Flame's Convector Ultra HE open-fronted gas fire combines the beauty of a traditional fireplace with first-rate fuel economy. It has a heat output of 4.7kW and at almost 75% net efficiency – enough to rival many glass-fronted appliances – it's a top choice for the energy savvy homeowner.
020 8254 6802, nu-flame.co.uk



Bring beauty to your heating with a restored rad. This double-column ornamental radiator is just one of the restored styles available from Salvage Doctor. Alongside decorative cast iron models like this one, there is a huge range including neo-classic, princess and school designs, and bespoke adaptations can be made.
01403 266 400, salvagedoctor.com



The Fireline 5kW multi-fuel stove is DEFRA exempt for wood burning in smoke control areas. It provides a clean burn and reduced carbon emissions which results in a very high efficiency and exceptionally clean glass. The stove retails from £620, or from £1,600 with the fireplace as shown.
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Above
Carved in limestone, the Clandon Bolection surround (£1,914) is based on a Queen Anne design with uncluttered lines and gentle curves. It's seen here with the Swansnest fire basket (£300) and Burton Andrions (£474), all **chesneys.co.uk**



Left
The ornate Chichester surround (£9,576) has a mid-18th century feel, and features stunning, ornate, hand-crafted stonework. It's shown here with the Osterley fire basket (£1,860). **chesneys.co.uk**

Below
With its double doors and impressive 9.3kW output capacity, the Morsø Ø8 is well suited to large rooms, like open plan family rooms and kitchen-diners. **morso.co.uk**



THE HEAT IS ON

Make sure your period home is ready for the winter chill with our handy guide

As wonderful as period properties may be, they can also be cold and draughty, so finding cost-effective ways of heating yours is crucial if you want cosiness throughout the winter.

It's a conundrum facing all period home owners, including our very own dear Queen, whose gas and electricity bills are rumoured to be in excess of £1m a year. If you're looking to cut costs, you're in good company. Surely even Her Majesty would like to reduce her heating expenditure?

ALL SYSTEMS GO

An efficient boiler is crucial, so get your central heating system checked by a professional who will be able to advise you on budget-friendly ways of improving it.

Next, consider your radiators in terms of their size and positioning. When it comes to style, take inspiration from your home's age and opt for a restored original like those found in specialist outlets such as thesalvagedoctor.com. Here you'll discover cast iron beauties which have been reconditioned to meet modern heating requirements.

Or, create a sense of the unexpected in a room with a sculptural feature radiator. Vertical designs can make terrific solutions for awkward spaces, and provide the wow-factor. You can find many styles with interesting twists, including copper, brass and wood-effect finishes.

FIRED UP

When it comes to cosiness, the comforting crackle of an open fire is hard to beat, even though it's not necessarily the most practical heating solution. Lighting a fire can be messy and time consuming, plus you'll need to store fuel, such as logs, kindling and coal. Also, much of the heat escapes through the chimney, although measures can be taken to counteract this to some extent in the form of convection systems and fans. If you're new to the property, do get an expert to check the chimney, hearth and air supply, to ensure they all comply with safety standards, and always get your chimney swept at least once a year.

Weigh up how important an open fire is to you – would you rather keep your fireplace as a hassle-free decorative feature and install a gas or electric substitute? Be honest with yourself.

ON THE STOVE

A stove is a less messy, more efficient option, which also complements a period property – hence, they have enjoyed a renaissance in recent years. Multi-fuel or wood burners can cost anything from £200 to £2,000 plus installation, but are thought to be up to five times more cost-effective than traditional fireplaces. And, good news if you live in a smokeless zone but dream of a real log fire: look for a DEFRA exempt (ie approved) stove.

If you're considering switching to a stove but are unsure of what's involved, speak to an expert at Dowling Stove Design (01988 402 666) or visit the website dowlingstoves.com to find out more about the installation process.

How you decide to heat your home is a delicate balance between practicality and personal preference, so it pays to do your research in order to select the best choice for you.

The crackle of an open fire is hard to beat, while stoves are cleaner and more efficient

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Window of Opportunity

Ensure your sashes are looking great and working well this winter with Reddiseals

January is the time for a refresh, but before you redecorate your bedroom, get a new sofa in the sales, or make plans for your dream kitchen, take a minute to consider your windows. Not only do they affect the look of your home, they also help to regulate temperature and, of course, let in natural light. If yours are rattling and draughty, are a struggle to open and close, or if they just won't stay in place, giving them a touch of TLC can make all the difference to you and your home.

Reddiseals is the largest independent supplier of timber window components and accessories in the UK, having supplied the industry since 1989. The company specialises in sash window components, so your traditional box sashes can be restored and renovated with ease, and you can also find a comprehensive range of products for timber casement windows too. Using the latest innovations in technology, Reddiseals products will ensure that your period windows look and work better than ever.

HANDLE WITH CARE

Brand new to Reddiseals' collection of window furniture is the Norton Casement range (pictured above), a selection of luxury window furniture in traditional and contemporary ironmongery designs. Matching locking fasteners with discreet locks, stays and espagnolette handles give your windows a sleek and co-ordinated finish.

Each product is hot forged using top-quality tooling and machinery to guarantee that they are hardwearing and offer good corrosion resistance. There are seven classic finishes to choose from, all of which will beautifully enhance your windows.

This selection of high-quality window furniture is specifically designed for timber casement windows, so whether you're restoring a period property or simply refurbishing your existing windows, you'll find a wide range of popular styles and luxurious finishes that are available at affordable prices.

SEAL OF APPROVAL

With an extensive choice of products, styles and finish, Reddiseals is proud to offer the best range, quality and value for money to its customers. "We are traditionally known for our wide selection of sash products at Reddiseals," says the company's general manager. "These can be used in the renovation and refurbishment of existing fenestration, or as a traditional-style complement to new windows. Our knowledge and experience in timber windows led us to create this new range of products dedicated to the wooden casement window market. Norton Casement was exclusively launched at W14, the joinery and furniture manufacturing show, and it offers a beautifully forged range of high-quality window furniture in various styles and finishes to suit your specification and budget."

If you have any questions, queries or just need help in finding the right product for you, Reddiseals' dedicated customer service and technical advice team is always on hand to help.

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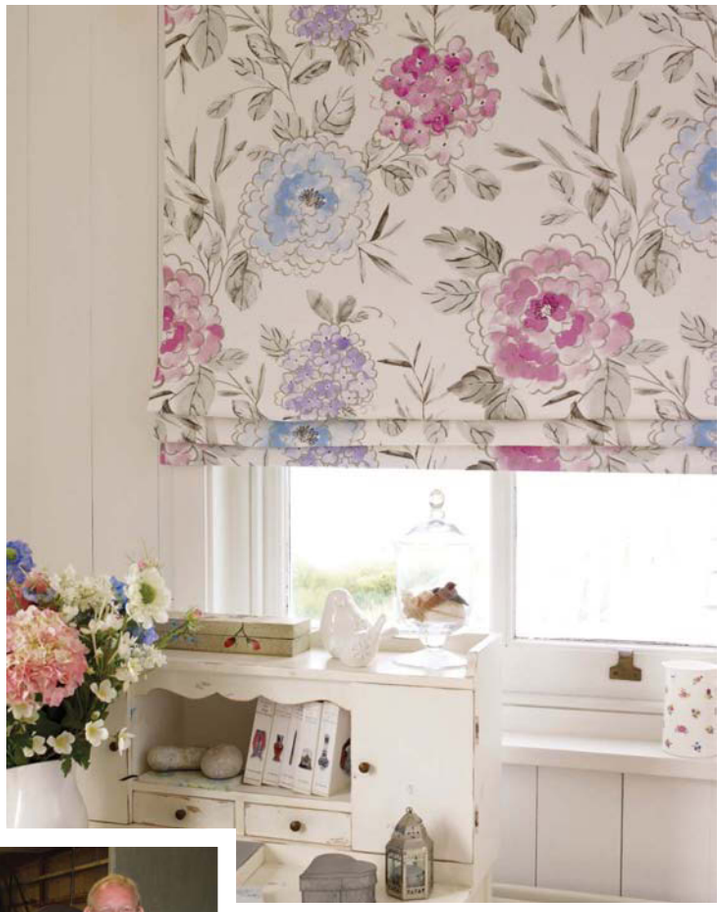
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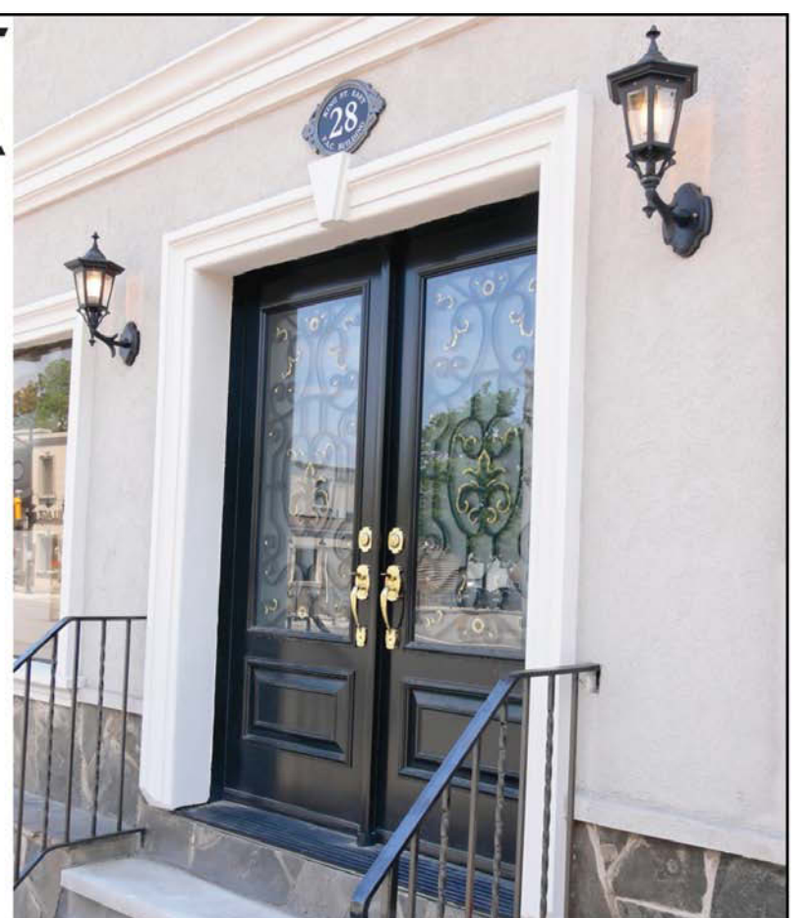
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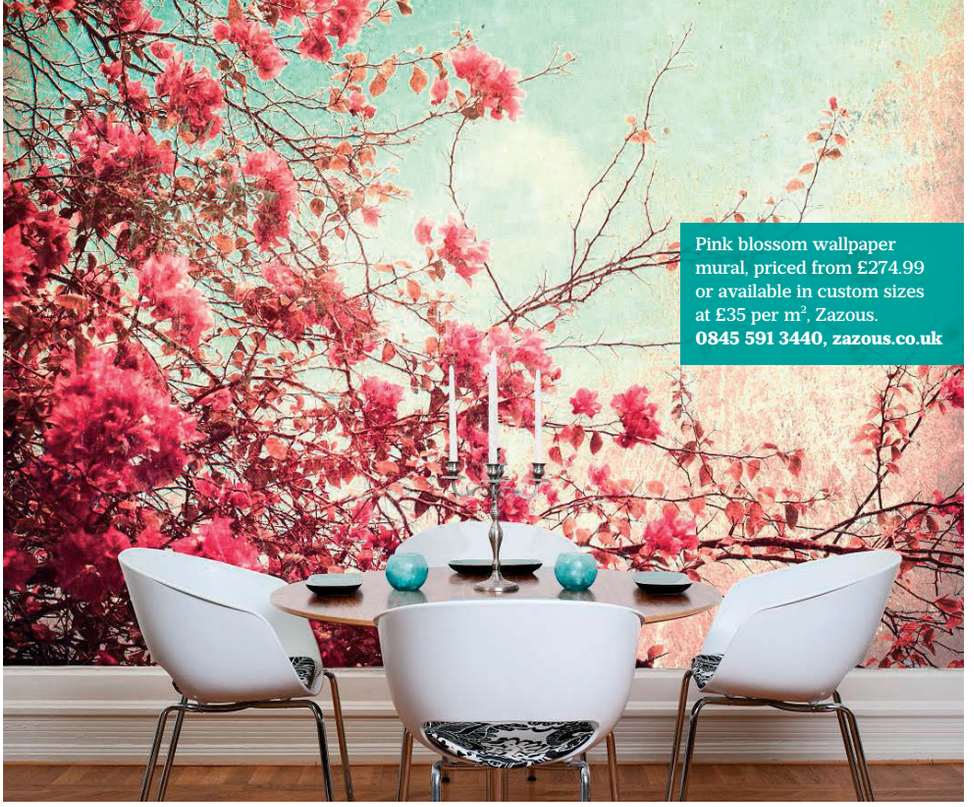






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EDITOR'S CHOICE

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0800 323 4050, tesco.com

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0345 259 1410, artisanti.com



Leff Amsterdam Brick clock, £225, Design 55 Interiors.
01422 375 940, design55online.co.uk



Newgate Sprint alarm clock, £30, Hintons Home.
01202 977 329, hintonshome.com

PRINTS CHARMING

For a range of stunning patterns and designs to brighten up your home this winter, check out The Shed Inc. Its colourful and stylish prints are available on fabrics, wallpapers, china, dog beds and more. These Aztec mugs are priced from £9.99 each. Call **0844 409 7827** or click on **theshedinc.co.uk**



SHOP 'TIL YOU DROP

A new, easy-to-use website showcases products from the UK's top high street and online stores. ***Myhomeneedsthat.com*** *helps you to find that perfect item for your home at the click of a mouse, and features all the nation's favourite retailers such as John Lewis and Multiyork.*

CREATURE COMFORTS



Animals by Khouja is home to the stunning and expressive animal paintings of artist Faisal Khouja. Head online to see his gallery of works on dogs, cats, horses and other creatures, and commission a piece of your beloved family pet or other favourite animal.
01285 658 735, animalsbykhouja.com



REALLY RETRO

Head to Kernow Furniture Warehouse for a huge selection of vintage, retro and antique furniture to fill your home, like this antique-style French marquetry bureau de dame, priced at £495. Call **07590 626 419** or click on **kernowfurniturewarehouse.co.uk** for this and hundreds of other spectacular items.



GOING GREY

*Meg Morton, the one-stop shop for beautiful homewares, now has these stylish grey Voyage cushions as part of its collection. Priced from £29.99 each, choose from the glistening tree design of the Ravenna Gilt or go for the Silver Key pattern. Call **07952 089 075** or visit **megmorton.co.uk** for these and other great items.*



FAMILY MATTERS

"Flossy's Footstools was started in memory of my mum, Florence Anne, who passed away a few years ago," says Tracy Bigrigg. "Known as Flossy to friends and family, she had a great eye for interior design and loved nothing more than decorating homes. When we moved from London to Scotland, my mum fell in love with all things tartan. Her first shop, Florence Anne Furnishing, displayed stunning tartan sofas, chairs and footstools. When she passed away I really wanted to do something in her memory, so I quit my job and began designing footstools. I have a love of all things chintz, although the tartan is growing on me, so my footstools are a mixture of Balmoral tartans and prestigious one-off fabrics. My first shop is now open, and it's only two doors up from where my mum's store was."
07980 654 741, flossysfootstools.co.uk

TOUCH WOOD

*If you want to fill your home with period charm, Deacon & Sandys is here to help. The company specialises in architectural joinery, so you can get traditional oak panelling, flooring and furniture for your property – be it period or modern. For further information call **01580 243 331** or go to **deaconandsandys.co.uk** to see how you can improve your home.*

SLUMBER PARTY

Snooze in style with luxurious duvet covers, pillowcases and quilts from Luella Linen. From lovely, light linen sheets to the smoothest, softest silk, you can be sure you'll get the perfect night's sleep. Call **07830 237 345** or see what's in store online at **luellalinen.com**

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01565 654 092, antiquesknutsford.co.uk



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Antiques & Vintage



MARGARET POWLING is one of Britain's best-loved antiques experts. She began collecting as a child and has a life-long love of fine china, beautiful books and historic homes. Her column combines practical tips with the best advice from specialists at auction houses nationwide.


BRITAIN'S HERITAGE Precious possessions

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Homes & Gardens



KATE FAULKNER is famous for her honest and direct approach to renovating and property buying. Drawing from her own experiences on the property ladder, she will help you care for your period house from making an offer to renovating, moving and selling.


LAST WORD Bricks & mortar

KATE FAULKNER

LESSONS I'VE LEARNED

Creating a basement in a period home: great idea or a recipe for disaster?

Edited by LLOYD BURGESS

A basement conversion sounds like a fabulous idea, but you will need expert planning from start to finish. This is not a job to try with your fingers crossed

KATE FAULKNER katefaulkner.co.uk

Gardens & Special Offers



SARAH RAVEN is the queen bee of the British gardening scene. She has been running cooking, flower arranging, growing and gardening classes at her East Sussex farm since 1999. Every month she will reveal her top planting advice and share a fantastic offer.


OUTDOOR IDEAS Festive foraging

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Sarah Raven

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This competition is open to all UK residents aged 18 or over, excluding employees or agents of the associated companies and their families. One entry per person. The prizes detailed in each competition/giveaway cannot be exchanged for goods, or towards the purchase of goods at any retail outlet. Postal entries must be on the coupon provided. It cannot be exchanged for cash, or replaced if lost or damaged. Illegible entries and those that do not abide by these terms and conditions will be disqualified. Prizes must be taken as stated and cannot be deferred. The decision of the judge is final and no correspondence will be entered into. CLOSING DATE: 9th January 2015. Winners will be notified by phone, post or email. A list of winners will be available in writing on request from Andrea Turner, 21/23 Phoenix Court, Hawkins Road, Colchester, Essex, CO2 8JY.

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LESSONS I'VE LEARNED

Our property expert on successfully adapting the layout of your home

Edited by **LLOYD BURGESS**

Always keep in mind the saleability of your home. Increasing room sizes by reducing the number of bedrooms can deflate the value



Changing the floor plans of an older property can be a great way of increasing space and making your home more convenient and attractive. However, before you make or even plan any changes to your current layout, you need to check a few things. You don't want to damage your property or, even worse, reduce its value!

To begin with, it's worth finding out what impact any changes in layout might have on your property's value and saleability. Increasing room sizes by reducing the number of bedrooms or reception rooms can mean that the price of your property will go down. A local property expert will have the expertise to advise you on this. I recommend looking for an estate agent who is also a member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). If you aren't planning to leave your property for many years, then perhaps you don't need to worry about its value right now, but it is always worthwhile making sure that it looks appealing to buyers. You never know what the future holds, and it's always handy to be in a good position to sell.

Next, before you consider moving any walls, you need to know if they are load-bearing or not. Moving these types of walls requires you to contact local Building Control, just in case you need to adhere to any relevant building regulations. A job like this will also require expert help, which can substantially increase the cost and time it takes to complete the work. And it's not just the walls themselves either – it is likely that there are electrics and maybe even plumbing running through them, which will need relocating.

Taking out a load-bearing wall will require detailed measurements to work out the length and weight of the steel beam needed to prop up any ceilings or floor joists. Your builder can do this work, but it's wise to consult a building surveyor, architect or engineer. They will have professional indemnity insurance, which will be a lifesaver should something go wrong and you need to make a claim.

If you are creating new walls, then these will need to be approved under Building Regulations. These rules require you to use the correct insulation – both from a thermal and noise perspective – and to ensure that they are fire resistant.

If your property is listed, leasehold or has any covenants on it, then it is likely you will need to seek permission before you go ahead with any of your proposed changes. Bear in mind that approval can take weeks or months and even then, you may be required to modify your original plans. If this is the case, you may decide it isn't worthwhile to do the work after all. This is why it's useful to involve any third party decision-makers early on in the process – so that you don't end up spending a lot of money on plans which may have to be scrapped.

Moving walls can also mean adding new door or window openings. This may seem a relatively simple task, but these are covered by building regulations too. There are rules relating to fire risk, escape routes, ventilation, insulation and positioning – all of which may seem a bit petty or restrictive, but they have been put in place to protect you and your family should something go wrong.

Each of these rules and regulations are well worth knowing about and sticking to. If you don't, it is likely to affect any building regulation certificates you need. If you try to sell the property later, unapproved changes will come back to haunt you, and can be expensive to correct once the work has been done. For more help on changing the layout of your period home, visit planningportal.gov.uk and propertychecklists.co.uk.

KATE FAULKNER katefaulkner.co.uk

Kate is one of the UK's leading residential property experts. She writes *Which? Property* books and regularly appears on the BBC and ITV news as well as Radio 4 and 5live. Find out more at **propertychecklists.co.uk**

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